9,000 ...that's 3,000 more than our rival

UK & INTERNATIONAL EDITION

The Industry's Largest Circulation Trade Weekly

Issue 69 Friday January 21 2000

MCV

The Market for Home Computing & Video Games

Bruno Sajno opens up new software sector for DVD with Eurotalk launch

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Dave Evans plans to use EB's High Street strength to win the e-commerce war

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Graeme Struthers takes up new role in charge of Crave assault on the UK

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Sega Lara lifts Eidos

Dreamcast version of Tomb Raider gives format a boost too, with release due in March

EIDOS PROVIDED a massive boost to Sega and fought back against a City backlash yesterday by announcing that it is taking the blockbuster Tomb Raider franchise onto Dreamcast.

The British games publisher and developer has endured a rough ride from media and investors alike since revealing on Tuesday afternoon (January 18th) that some severe disappointments in its third fiscal quarter to December 31st would reduce full-year profits.

A third was immediately wiped off the Eidos share price, settling at around £25 at press time. This accelerated a decline which had begun on January 5th, when Merrill Lynch reduced its investment rating in the company. A month ago, the price was £64.50 and plans for a share-split (MCV 26/11) may now be in doubt.

Full-year profits are expected to be "significantly below" the £37.9m achieved to March 31st last year, when some analysts had been predicting £50-£55m.

Whilst sales of core products like Tomb Raider 4 and Champ Manager have sold well, Eidos has seen support titles fail to live up to expectations. There have also been product delays and under-performance in France and Germany.

Lara has given the Dreamcast an unexpected boost

Tomb Raider 4 for the Sega Dreamcast, vastly superior to its Sony PlayStation counterpart, will be rolled out globally in March.

This will bolster what is already a very powerful first quarter armoury from Eidos and will also help to drive hardware sales of the console at retail.

Sony to move

THE UK PlayStation team will have a new home later this year. Sony Computer Entertainment UK will be moving from its current base in Great Marlborough Street within the next six months as it looks to further expand in the run-up to the launch of PlayStation 2. It will remain in the Soho area of London, however, and will continue to operate separately from Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's headquarters in Golden Square.

Infogrames creates London stronghold

Key roles for Pirie, Campbell, Sparks and North-Hearn as Infogrames moves south, but GTI HQs close in France, Benelux & Germany

THE GTI NAME will disappear almost instantly from Europe as Infogrames integrates the company it bought late last year for $135m, but the good news is that job losses will be minimal.

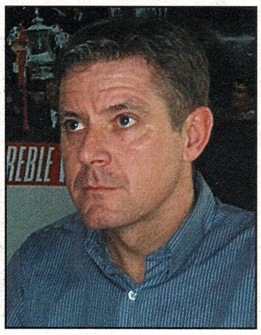
GTI's Hammersmith office in West London will become the French firm's base for all northern European territities, plus Australia and South Africa.

Any reference to GTI will be wiped out by March 1st on this side of the Atlantic.

Two floors of Infogrames' four floor office in Manchester will now be let out, as sales, marketing and administration move to London.

Manchester keeps development staff, plus some producers. GTI's QA department will be relocated to Manchester or Sheffield.

PIRIE: Overall boss of new company



CAMPBELL: UK managing director

SPARKS: Key I-Motion role

GTI's offices in France, Benelux and Germany will close.

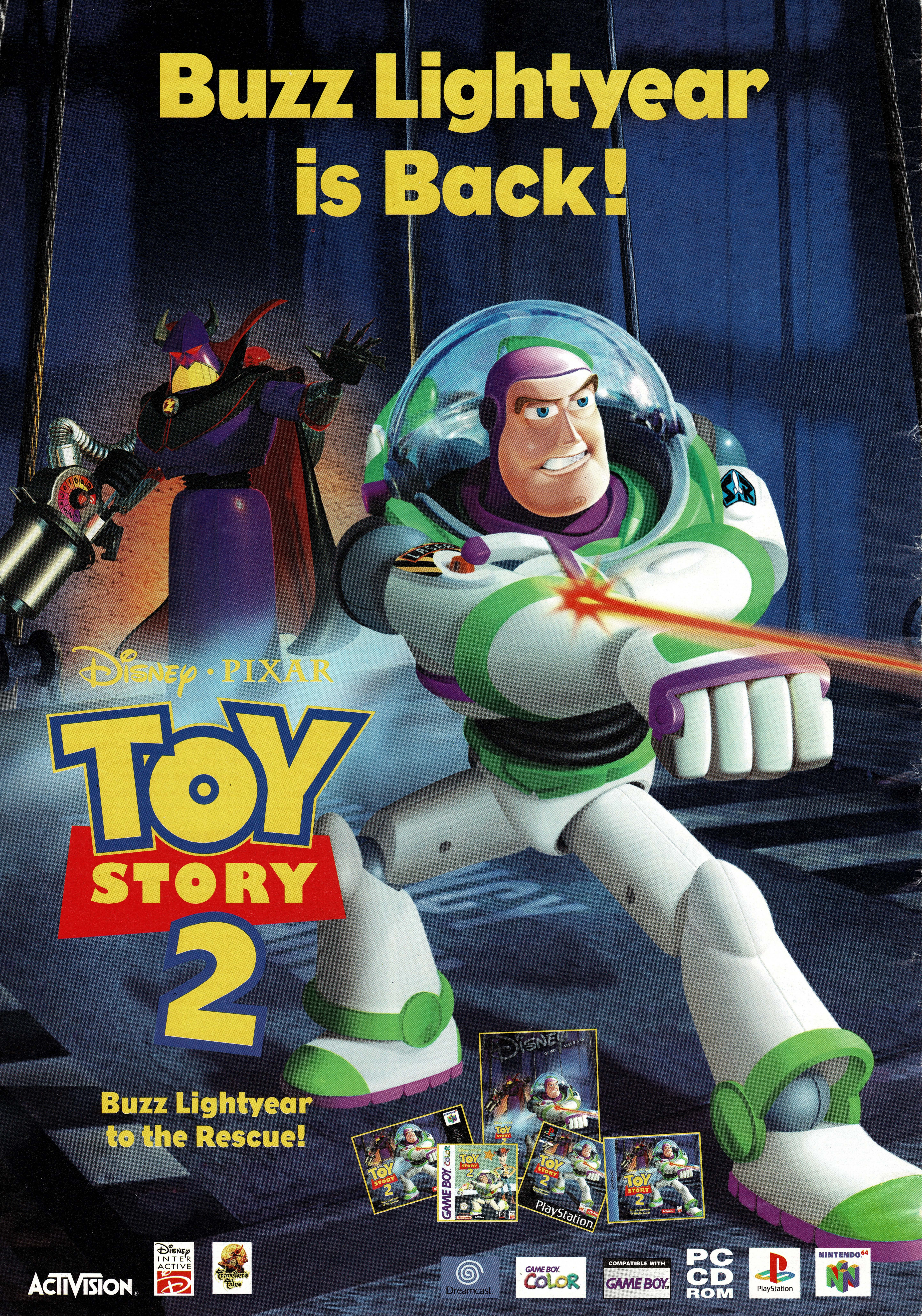
Esrtwhile GTI Europe boss John Pirie becomes managing director of all territories run out of the UK with Roy Campbell stepping up from sales director of Infogrames in Manchester to become UK managing director of the ever-growing publisher.

The publishing side of the key Infogrames I-Motion/I-Action division will move south, with Larry Sparks heading up all marketing for the territories reporting to London. This is the division that includes blockbuster franchises such as Driver, Alone In The Dark, Total Annihilation, Duke Nukem and Outcast.

Some 40-80 people will remain in Manchester once a transition period is complete.

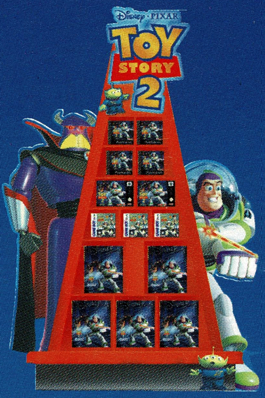
There will be 100 staff in London. More than 200 work in Sheffield, with this studio base untouched and James North-Hearn remaining in charge of all UK development activity. David Ward continues as chairman of the UK company, but Michel Lanne will give up his role as UK managing director for a new position within the group.

Infogrames' chairman Bruno Bonnell says that so far only 10 per cent of the 350 UK Infogrames/GTI staff have not been offered a role of some sort "and we're still working to reducing that". But clearly location and other personal factors will see departures emerge over the coming weeks.


Buzz Lightyear
is Back!
Disney · PIXAR
TOY STORY 2
Buzz Lightyear
to the Rescue!
ACTIVISION
DISNEY INTERACTIVE
Traveller's Tales
Dreamcast
GAME BOY COLOR
COMPATIBLE WITH GAME BOY
PC CD ROM
PlayStation
NINTENDO 64

MARKETING ACTIVITY

- 6 Week National Cinema campaign.
- 3 Month Specialist press campaign.
- Youth and teen press campaign including Beano, Dandy, Live & Kicking and Match.
- Promotion running across 2.1 million Nestlé Easter Eggs.
- Promotion running across 1.2 million packs of Shreddies and Cheerios cereal.
- Focus on 8 million McDonald's trayliners.



Buzz Lightyear is Back!
DISNEY · PIXAR
TOY STORY 2
Buzz Lightyear to the Rescue!
ACTIVISION

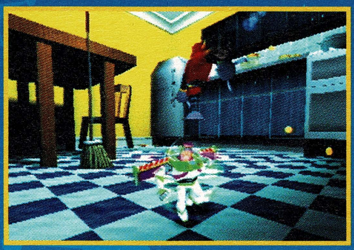
IN-STORE SUPPORT

- FSDU - Holds PlayStation®, Nintendo 64, Game Boy and PC product.
- 12" Buzz Lightyear mini standees.
- PlayStation jumbo boxes.
- PlayStation demo discs.
- A2 Posters

PRODUCT FEATURES

ENTER THE WORLD OF TOY STORY 2:

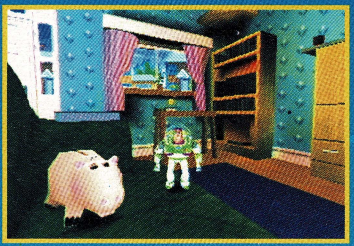
Relive the fun and excitement of the Disney/Pixar film as Buzz Lightyear. Interact with key characters and explore environments from the movie across 15 huge levels. Take on five big bosses, including Zurg, the evil Prospector and his henchmen.



Spin, spring, somersault and bounce through 15 colourful, action-packed levels.

TAP INTO TOY POWER:

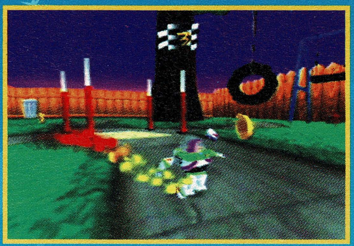
Get special powers to complete your missions by unlocking toy accessories, which include rocket jet boots, a grappling hook, an arm laser and moon spring boots. Enlist the assistance of you favourite toy in getting long-lasting power-ups, and let Hamm, Slinky and Rex help you along in saving Woody.



Enjoy fast and fun 3-D gameplay with your favourite characters from the movie!

LEAD, CONQUER AND DO SOMERSAULTS:

As Buzz, you'll be able to use lasers and whirling torso spins to save the day. Plus, you can jump, swing, bounce and somersault through the air – not to mention combining those moves in rapid succession as Buzz does in the movie.



Unlock special toy accessories to complete your missions, like cool rocket jet boots.

To place an order, contact Centresoft on 0121 625 3388, or Activision on 01895 456 700.

Point-of-sale is available from ISM, call 0121 633 0774.

For PC CD ROM contact Infogrames UK sales on 0161 827 8000.

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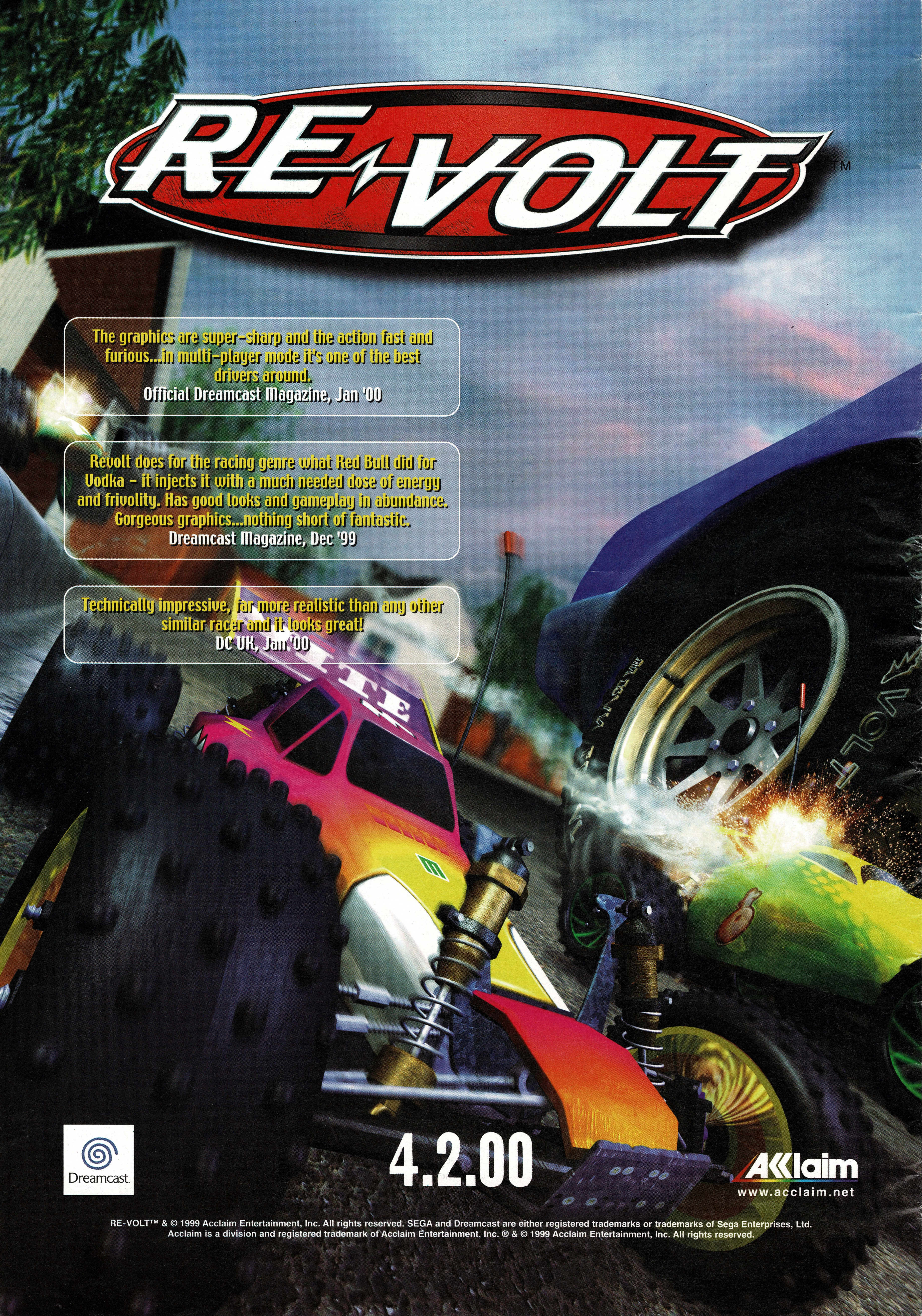

The graphics are super-sharp and the action fast and furious...in multi-player mode it's one of the best drivers around.
Official Dreamcast Magazine, Jan '00

Revolt does for the racing genre what Red Bull did for Vodka - it injects it with a much needed dose of energy and frivolity. Has good looks and gameplay in abundance. Gorgeous graphics...nothing short of fantastic.
Dreamcast Magazine, Dec '99

Technically impressive, far more realistic than any other similar racer and it looks great!
DC UK, Jan '00

www.acclaim.net

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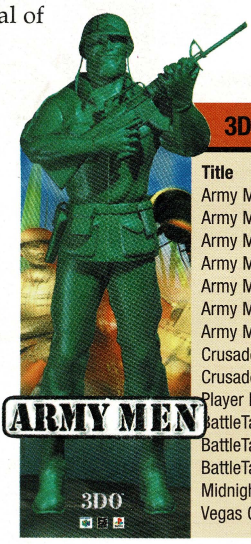
3DO ready to fire first salvo

Dates confirmed and retail backed by £3m spend, as 3DO sends Army Men and more into Europe

THE LONG AWAITED launch of 3DO into Europe begins next week, with the arrival of its first Army Men releases and a £3m marketing push.

The company has worked hard to build strong relationships with retail and has lined up a number of promotions with the independent sector and with a variety of multiples.

Via distributor Centresoft, indies will be given the opportunity to buy six units of PlayStation titles Army Men 3D or Army Men Air Attack and get one free.



3DO Q1 Release Schedule

Title	Format	Release
Army Men 3D	PSX	Jan 28th
Army Men In Space	PC	Jan 28th
Army Men Air Attack	PSX	Feb 11th
Army Men Sarge's Heroes	N64	Mar 10th
Army Men	GBC	Mar 24th
Army Men Air Tactics	PC	Mar 24th
Army Men Sarge's Heroes	PSX	Mar 31st
Crusaders of Might & Magic	PSX	Mar 10th
Crusaders of Might & Magic	PC	Mar 24th
Player Manager 2000	PC/PSX	Mar 17th
BattleTanx Global Assault	N64	Mar 17th
BattleTanx	GBC	Mar 31st
BattleTanx Global Assault	PSX	TBC
Midnight In Vegas	PSX	Mar 17th
Vegas Games	GBC	Mar 24th

In addition, if they order both titles, they will receive a free pre-loaded Army Men 3D cheat card.

A full range of POS is also available to the trade, including 5ft 'Sarge' FSDUs, A2 and A3 posters, plus 3D counter top display units.

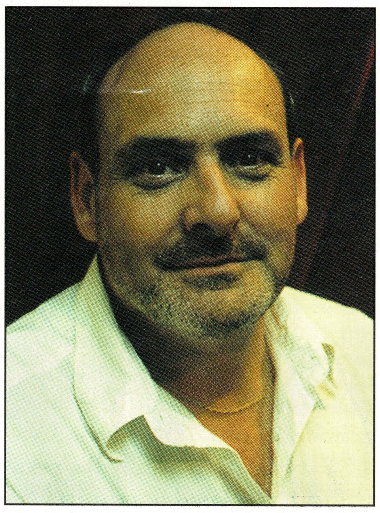
Meanwhile, individual deals with multiples will see Virgin Megastores give away a free branded Army Men T-shirt and MVC roll out national press advertising, while HMV, Electronics Boutique, Game, WH Smith, Beatties and Dixons Stores Group have all guaranteed window displays and/or high profile in-store displays.

Retail knows the ScoRE

NASCR chairman Clive Bishop has confirmed that a retail event called SCoRE will take place in April this year.

The general secretary of the powerful indie trade body has sought to calm some concerns, however, that ScoRE ((Specialist Computer Retailer Event) will lose the focus or intimacy that helped previous NASCR shows achieve great success.

"In simple terms, SCoRE is not a replacement for the NASCR event, just a renaming," he told MCV. "Working with organiser Miller Freeman, we found that the new name had broader appeal, hence the change. The NASCR name seemed to discourage non-members slightly and gave an insular view to the proceedings."



BISHOP: "New name for show has broader appeal"

The two-day independent retailer event will take place at Birmingham's National Motorcycle Museum between April 15-16th .

Menzies blames games for dip

JOHN MENZIES PLC has blamed its Total Home and Entertainment subsidiaries, including THE Games, for a 6.6 per cent drop in its share price.

Although the group's first-half pre-tax profit showed a 28 per cent increase, Menzies' share price dropped after poor Christmas sales of games, music and videos. Menzies' chief executive David Mackay blamed its THE divisions' failure to win new business for the poor figures.

He cited the challenge of the Dreamcast against THE Games' ageing N64 console as an example, but admitted that the success of the Pokemon franchise had helped dampen the impact.

Sony plans for online PS2 sales

SONY has set up an Internet sales service in preparation for the launch of PlayStation 2.

With the shift to e-commerce gathering speed, Sony Japan has established PlayStation.com to offer its range of hardware and software online. It is also looking to add Sony-branded music CDs and DVDs at a later date to capitalise on PlayStation 2's compatibility with the mediums.

The site goes live on February 1st. Europe and the US are likely to follow suit nearer PS2's regional launches, although SCEE is currently unwilling to confirm a definite date for the UK site.

Cork sweeps up at retail

SAFEWAY and Somerfield are set to stock a range of PlayStation titles from next month.

Specialist distributor Cork International has secured two impressive deals to introduce the Sony range to both chains. The addition of PlayStation titles follows Cork's successful trial of CD-ROM titles across Safeway stores. It also comes as the Wal-Mart-owned chain starts to move into non-food areas as part of its expansion plans.

The new agreement marks Somerfield's first full move into software. It has previously tested a limited CD-ROM range but will now roll out specially-designed standees for jewel and Sierra-boxed CD-ROM titles and PlayStation releases.

SAFEWAY
Lightening the load

SOMERFIELD

Supermarkets increase commitment to games

"Cork's unique combination of scale, display solutions and merchandising service will always give us the edge in non-specialist accounts in the grocery channel," commented consumer software business manager Phil Phillipou.

Software Revenues

Week ending January 15th

	Last Week	This Week
Total Market	£22.6m	**£15.3m**
Full Price Console	£9.3m	**£5.8m**
Full Price PC	£7.7m	**£5.8m**
Budget Console	£3.9m	**£2.5m**
Budget PC	£1.7m	**£1.3m**
Cumulative 2000:		**£37.9m**

Top Earners This Week

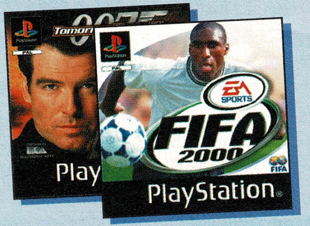
1. FIFA 2000 (EA/THQ) PSX/PC/GBC
EA's mega-hit remains at the top **£335,622**

2. Tomorrow Never Dies (EA/MGM) PSX
Great licence, great earner **£277,048**

3. Tomb Raider 4 (Eidos) PSX/PC
Continues to do the business **£260,313**

4. Champ. Manager 99/00 (Eidos) PC
Best selling PC-only title **£199,830**

5. Medal of Honour (EA) PSX
Surprise hit from EA **£160,926**



Source: MCV/ChartTrack/Elspa

Share Prices

	Price 15/1/2000	One week % change
US		**%**
3Dfx	9.438	0.00%
3DO	10	11.11%
Acclaim	3.406	-28.76%
Activision	16.938	5.04%
Adrenalin Interactive	4.813	13.25%
Brilliant Digital	32.438	12.34%
Creative Technology	18.063	9.47%
eGames	3.063	2.10%
Eidos	60.5	-13.11%
Electronic Arts	84.813	2.96%
Electronics Boutique	17.625	-4.73%
Funco	12.5	-3.85%
GT Interactive	2.938	20.51%
Hasbro	16.5	-0.38%
HearMe.com	26.875	-0.92%
Intel	103.063	25.69%
Intergraph	5.094	6.55%
Interplay	3.25	1.94%
Mattel	12.938	1.97%
Microsoft	112.25	0.73%
Midway	19	-17.39%
Number Nine Visual Tech.	0.09	12.50%
Recoton	11.5	8.24%
S3	14.5	26.09%
Silicon Graphics	9.563	3.38%
Take-Two	14.313	6.02%
THQ	25	-1.96%
Toys R Us	11.438	-4.19%
Walt Disney	33.563	7.83%
UK		**%**
Elect.Boutique	0.333	-19.37%
Eidos	38.02	-14.70%
Future Net	8.525	-0.29%
Gameplay.com	6	43.88%
Online	3.15	3.11%
Pure Entertainment	1.1	21.55%
Rage	0.61	9.91%
SCi	4.295	-18.03%
France		**%**
Cryo	41.9	-0.24%
Infogrames	33.99	3.56%
Kalisto	83.1	18.71%
Titus	59	31.11%
Ubi Soft	49.5	-14.75%
Vivendi	92.5	14.62%

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Comment

Enough bad news for a backlash… and time for hard work

SO WHAT do we really make of 1999 now that 2000 has started with less than impressive corporate statements from big name retailers and publishers?

Since January has begun, there has actually been little to cheer. From a purely UK basis, software sales have plummeted three weeks running now. Yes, sales always drop after the peak week, but the decline in value has been 19 per cent (to January 1st), 47 per cent (to January 8th) and 32 per cent (week to January 15th).

Total weekly sales have already dropped from a record high of £52.5m to £15.3m. But it isn't January that has caused the outbreak of bad news or a value shortfall. The seeds for that were sewn many months ago.

> ***It would appear that the golden goose called games is suffering from a little constipation right now.***

Year-on-year, total software sales for the week to January 15th are down four per cent by value. How does that happen when millions of new PlayStations, PCs, Game Boys, Dreamcasts and N64s have been shifted in the past 12 months? It would appear that the golden goose called games is suffering from a little constipation right now.

If I sound too much like a Cassandra, I don't mean to. The household penetration of different systems, the marketing budgets, retail support and promise of new hardware launches surely means that a crash is unlikely. But the need for frugal house-keeping and hard work (that means publishers working with retail and supporting their product properly, plus stores working with their customers) is apparent.

Acclaim announced a poor quarter last week, as the dependency on N64 and some product delays hit it hard. This had a knock-on effect on other Wall Street stocks. Many of the issues that the market must deal with before leaping to the brave new world of PS2, Dolphin, Game Boy Advance and DVD-ROM are global ones.

The Menzies group, weighted to N64 too because of its ownership of distributor THE Games, had some explaining to do to its shareholders this week. As did EB and Dixons, with the latter's chairman Stanley Kalms repeating my mantra of the past few weeks: "Heavy price deflation was not fully offset by volume growth".

We are a long way from the "games slump" that some rather hysterical national newspapers wrote about with glee on Wednesday morning. And one has to feel a little sorry for Eidos having to single-handedly answer for what (please God) may only be industry growing pains. I've seen the Eidos product plan for Q1, let alone the rest of the year. It's impressive and this company has also been clever enough to avoid Sony restraints and line up Tomb Raider for Game Boy and Dreamcast.

Eidos is not the only clever company and that helps me to believe that the industry will come through this current turbulence relatively unscathed. But it won't apply to the fat, lazy or unmotivated. A point which applies equally to all of us.

Stuart Dinsey
Stuart.Dinsey@mcvuk.com

Talking Shop

Give us something to sell!

WHY DO we always have a stock void the first two weeks in January? I think it's time the publishers got their fingers out. It's hard to satisfy your customers when there are hardly any new releases after Christmas. This is a prime time to sell good titles that may have got lost in the Christmas rush. There are thousands of new console owners, many presumably desperate for a new title to test out on their brand-new machines and we don't have anything for them.

I also find it incredible that at the busiest time of year publishers and accessory and peripheral manufacturers take an extended holiday over Christmas and New Year leaving retailers with stock shortage problems every January. I would just like to remind them that the world does not stop at Christmas!

****

HAVING READ Owain Bennallack's article 'Death-Race 2000' (MCV 14/1), I agree that the retail price of games needs to stabilise. I think that £39.99 is too expensive and that £29.99 should be the price point for PC and PlayStation.

Consumers don't know what the prices should be and considering the size of the market there should be enough unit sales to make a profit for both retailers and publishers.

I can see the dilemma of publishers who don't want to restore margins if it means retailers chasing the Holy Grail of increased market share and discounting yet again. It's time for some trust. And the reality is, prices have now been reduced for some time in the eyes of the consumer and they can't go back up without sales being hit very badly.

Don McCabe
don@chipsworld.co.uk

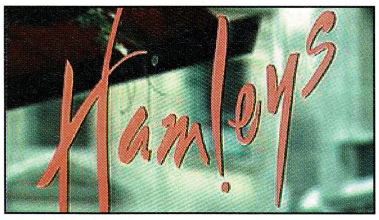
Games enliven Hamleys

Stuffy image ditched as toy store ups games commitment

HAMLEYS is expanding its computer and video games department as it looks to shake off its image as an old-fashioned store.

Its flagship Regent Street store has already given over the fifth floor to interactive entertainment and the next stage of its plan will see software and hardware move to the larger basement area.

The store's director of buying David Fogel feels the move is proof of its commitment to the medium. "With PlayStation 2 set to attract a new host of owners we are looking forward to growing Hamleys' reputation as a software outlet," he told MCV.



Famous toy store is increasing its games support

Since the arrival of new boss Simon Burke, Hamleys has campaigned to change consumer perceptions. This began with its first ever January sale, which included N64 consoles at £20.

While software will be playing a larger part in Hamleys' plans, the retailer will not be taking it into its newly acquired Toy Stack branches.

Eurotalk widens DVD scope

LANGUAGE SPECIALIST Eurotalk is to add language learning software to the DVD sector, with a major new product using the Inspector Morse licence.

Advanced English offers a variety of features only possible through the new technology. Users can access specific scenes, a picture dictionary and can even replace Morse's voice with their own within a scene.

The package includes an entire Inspector Morse episode which can be viewed separately to the main program. Further episodes are to be released during the year, with a James Bond licence also being discussed.

SAJNO: Taking full advantage of the benefits of DVD

"Research shows that people learn languages better through watching television or a movie. Only with DVD could we create a product like this," said Eurotalk's vice president Bruno Sajno.

Darragh heads CMCS push

STEVE DARRAGH has been appointed by packaging and duplication service CMCS to aid its push into the games industry.

The CMCS group comprises nine companies that oversee all aspects of entertainment product packaging. It already provides duplication, repro, art and printing services for music companies such as Ministry and also handles the accounts for games publishers including Acclaim and Nintendo.

CMCS is planning a major assault on games sector

As part of Darragh's new role as sales and marketing director, he will be working to promote the group's services and looking to expand its share in the software industry. He previously held a similar role at replicator MPO.

Dev conference hits Sheffield

THE SHEFFIELD National Centre for Popular Music will play host to the cream of global software development talent next month

Infogrames and Microsoft's European Developer Relations Group are hosting the Emerging Technologies Conference (ETC 2000) on February 9-10th.

It will showcase the latest development tools and advances from software, hardware and middleware firms.

Infogrames' Bruno Bonnell will host a seminar, while Microsoft's technical evangelist Mike Gamble and the DirectX team will be on hand to answer questions.

Stores key to EB online attack

E-commerce boss Dave Evans will use power of High Street to promote extra Internet services

THE EB GROUP is looking to take on the likes of Gameplay.com and URWired in the e-commerce sector by using its High Street strength as a secret weapon.

The EB and Game websites went live last week, with in-store promotions through its 295 stores set to be at the forefront of its marketing strategy.

"We feel site presence is a massive advantage in our favour," said head of Internet Dave Evans.

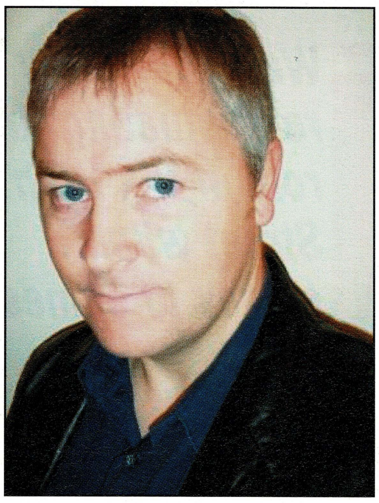
"There's the element of trust that comes from our size. We intend to make buying games as simple as possible and this includes allowing games bought online to be returned, which is something our rivals will charge up to £4 for."

Evans is also keen for the EB and Game e-commerce branches to be as competitive as possible.

"We won't be drawn into price-matching, however," he warned. "The City-listed firms could just slash prices until their opponents went away and we don't want to get involved with that."

Nevertheless, the online store does undercut the High Street cousins. A Dreamcast title costs £29.99-32.99 via the websites as opposed to £39.99 in-store. Evans feels customers accept the gap.

"The difference is an issue but if we don't compete, we won't sell," he admitted. "There's an expectation that we must meet and thus we'll have to bite the bullet. Out after-sales service and refund scheme will offer peace of mind that cheaper prices can't."



EVANS: "EB's online stores will offer peace of mind"

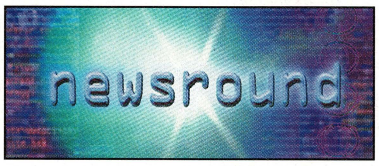
Sega boss on Newsround

BBC 1 children's show Newsround will feature an interview with Sega's global president Shoichiro Irimajiri today (Friday January 21st), plus an impressive PlayStation 2 update.

The show's presenter Lizo Mzimba is given unprecedented access to forthcoming hardware and software. The 12-minute programme focuses on the forthcoming three-way battle between the Dreamcast, PlayStation 2 and Dolphin.

Irimajiri is asked about his hopes for the future, while Mzimba also gets hands-on experience of GT 2000.

The show attempts to give a balanced opinion of the three systems, although due to a lack of availability Nintendo's Dolphin is only briefly featured.



A dark future for Game Boy

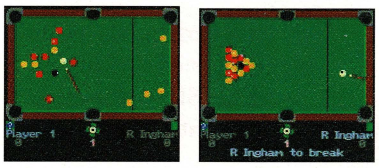
Nintendo has revealed that there will be a Game Boy Colour version of its eagerly awaited Perfect Dark. The Rare-developed title debuts on N64 in April, followed by the handheld version in the autumn.

Peugeot race on

THE GLOBAL game rights to Peugeot's World Rally team are available via licensing agency MediaSpart. It holds the rights to the 206 WRC Peugeot and will release them on a non-exclusive basis. MediaSPart also holds rights to the rest of the Peugeot range and recently picked up the Monte Carlo Rally. Interested parties should contact 00331 42889901.

Codemasters cues Game Boy

CODEMASTERS has bolstered its games portfolio with the confirmation of its first Game Boy release, Pro Pool, which will arrive in the spring.



Codemasters cues up for the Game Boy Colour

Developed by Blade Interactive, the creators of Codemasters' forthcoming World Championship Snooker, its release marks a solid commitment to the format.

Previously, it has licensed conversions of its titles to THQ.

Meanwhile, Codemasters has gained the official endorsement of the World Snooker Association for World Championship Snooker.

Delta sequel forces its way in

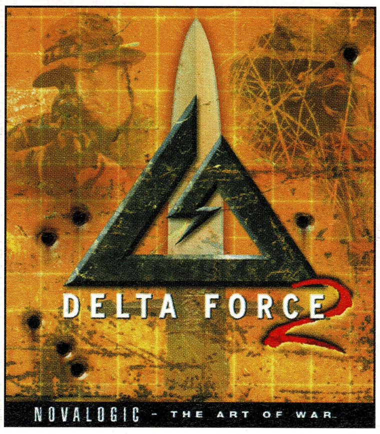
THE ORIGINAL Delta Force sold over 150,000 units in Europe, but NovaLogic believes this figure will be easily surpassed by its sequel.

The company has revealed that the sell-in figure for Delta Force 2 has already bettered the original with a day one ship-out of 50,000 units expected in the UK alone.

"Delta Force 2 will definitely be our biggest seller ever," stated NovaLogic's European marketing manager Georgina Forrest.

"In terms of Europe, sales in Scandinavia and Germany have already exceeded expectations. We're expecting the same in the UK with a No. 1 PC hit and a Top 10 placing in the all formats chart."

A £250,000 marketing campaign will back the game, which arrives on February 4th.



Newswires

Global push for Hasbro

Hasbro Interactive is next week holding a major conference for its key distributors from Europe and the Middle East. The second annual event, it is being held in London on January 26th and will bring together 60 delegates to hear the firm's business plans and product news for the next 12 months.
Hasbro: *0181 569 1234*

A Stirling signing for SCi

SCi has signed up legendary racer Stirling Moss to collaborate on its forthcoming game based on the Mille Miglia race. Moss is particularly famous for completing the 1,000 mile in 10 hours, seven minutes and 48 seconds in 1955 - a record that remains unbeaten.
SCi: *0171 585 3308*

Crucial heads online

Growing super budget outfit Crucial has launched it official website. www.crucialentertainment.com contains information on all titles for the £4.99 range, alongside competitions, news and online games.
Crucial: *0161 236 2830*

Lionhead enters Dome

Lionhead's fancied Black and White title is being featured in the Millennium Dome's Learning Zone. It forms part of the Lily and the Learning Seed exhibit and comprises a specially written level of the game.
Lionhead: *01483 796700*

Meroncourt moves

Scanner and digital camera service centre Meroncourt has moved. Its new address is Unit 1, Umo Business Park, Blackhorse Road, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 1HR. Tel: 01462 680060, Fax: *01462 680070.*

Gameplay goes Wireless

Gameplay.com has signed an agreement with Cable and Wireless to provide a games channel for a new website. Gameplay will become the sole e-retailer on the new cwcom.net and snoopa.com sites for a year and will develop other services with the group.
Gameplay.com: *0207 959 8500*

Infogrames splits up

Infogrames has announced a 5-for-1 stock split. Share capital for the firm now amounts to F272.7m and is divided into 68.2m shares.
Infogrames: *0161 827 8000*

Globe expands

Online network theglobe.com has acquired leading online retailer Chips and Bits and Premier Game publisher Strategy Plus. Both will be used to expand the portals gaming content, with the combined deal valued at $16m.
theglobe: *001 212 894 3606*

Fire shuffles pack

Fire International has made two new additions to its team. Sandra Farrah joins as PA to group CEO Jason Cooper, while John Riley has joined the firm's creative department.
Fire International: *01302 325225*

Pink Planet gloomy, but not for sale

Advances in broadband technology could eventually wipe out High Street, says boss of leading independent software retail chain

RETAIL is already excited about PlayStation 2, but Pink Planet warns that it could prove to be another nail in the coffin of traditional High Street retailing.

The warning comes as rumours had begun to circulate within the independent trade that Pink Planet might be up for sale.

This was instantly denied by the company, although it did admit to MCV that it is not interested in taking any new long-term leases because of concerns about the business climate for specialist games stores.

> “We're currently re-evaluating the role of the High Street when it comes to games.

Pink Planet boasts 11 stores nationwide. It is expecting massive sales of Sony's new console when it arrives in the UK this September.

Yet Sony has already stated its interest in future methods of software distribution brought upon by PS2's broadband features *(see page 6)*.

This is a real worry for any chain, says Pink Planet's boss Jason Gattiker.

"We're currently re-evaluating the role of the High Street when it comes to games and I actually believe that there will be no space for the games retailer on the High Street within 10-15 years," said Gattiker.

"It makes commercial sense to download games using Internet and broadband technology direct to the user because of the reduced costs.

"It would be foolish not to take this into account before considering our expansion options."

Gattiker denied the rumours that his company was up for sale but everything is under review.

WonderSwan to stick neck out?

A EUROPEAN LAUNCH for Bandai's WonderSwan might be inching closer, as the toy company continues to be impressed by the huge global boom in handheld console sales.

Indeed, it has just started testing the water in markets outside its home territory of Japan, with Hong Kong and Singapore seeing recent launches.

"Game Boy had its best year ever last year thanks to Pokemon and has dominated the handheld market for over 10 years now," Bandai's product manager Darrell Jones told MCV.

"But the success of SNK's Neo Geo Pocket Colour in the UK proves there is room for more players in the handheld market."

WonderSwan
TAITO
PUZZLE BOBBLE

Bandai is looking closely at potential of WonderSwan outside Japan, but colour screen might be needed here

The unit is currently only available with a mono screen, although rumours persist that a colour version is being planned.

The WonderSwan has sold almost two million units since its launch less than a year ago in Japan. Software supporters include Namco and Square.

Meerkats wins more custom

ACCESSORY manufacturer Promo Video has appointed Meerkats Interactive as exclusive UK and Ireland distributor of its PlayStation Graphic Kits.

The kits allow users to stick different designs onto their PlayStation to customise the consoles appearance. A total of 24 different styles will be available in February, with the stars of the show easily being the licensed Crash Bandicoot and Spyro The Dragon designs. A new style will be introduced every two months and Dreamcast Graphic Kits are also set to follow.

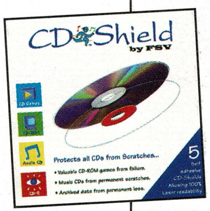
Meerkats beat off several high quality competitors to win the deal, based on its personal touch and the huge success of the Nyko range, which was introduced by the company last year.

CD Shield will defend discs

FIRST SOUND & Vision has launched a new product designed to protect CDs from damage.

The CD Shield is a transparent film that is applied to the underside of a music or games CD to protect the surface from spills and scratches. A set of five CD Shields is supplied in a jewel case.

CD Shield has already been snapped up by Electronics Boutique and Tempo stores, with more chains looking into the product.



A pack of five CD Shields will retail for £4.99. Marketing includes specialist and lifestyle press activity as well as a radio ad campaign.

POS materials are available.

New formats for Things

WILD THINGS has announced a range of new products for the New Year, including the company's first foray onto Game Boy and Dreamcast formats.

Four Game Boy accessories are expected including the Carry Pouch and a five foot long link cable, both retailing at £6.99.

Additionally, a RumbaPak will be available at £9.99. The unit attaches to the bottom of a Game Boy and enhances the sound quality of the machine via stereo speakers while also providing a rumble feature for any game.

Finally, a battery charger and power adapter will retail in-store for £12.99.

PlayStation peripherals include the redesigned KickBack 2 Dual Shock analogue controller (£14.99) and the 4 in 1 Memory Mania pack *(see our Hardware Guide on page 29 for more details)*.

The Primal Stick for the PC features four fire buttons, a HAT switch and throttle control. The unit will be available in a clear design case at an RRP of £14.99.

The only Dreamcast product currently available is a Scart lead that retails at £7.99.

OK for SafeDisc

DUPLICATION specialist OK Media has boosted its plans for UK expansion by becoming an official licensee of the SafeDisc protection system.

The German-owned services firm recently opened a London office. Around 30 per cent of its output is games-based and OK Media currently works for a host of UK games publishers.

"SafeDisc is the preferred copy protection mechanism and we intend to maintain and increase our market share," said OK Media's Doron Garfunkel.

OK Media also offers analogue finger-printing, plus a one-stop mastering and packaging service.

PlayStation

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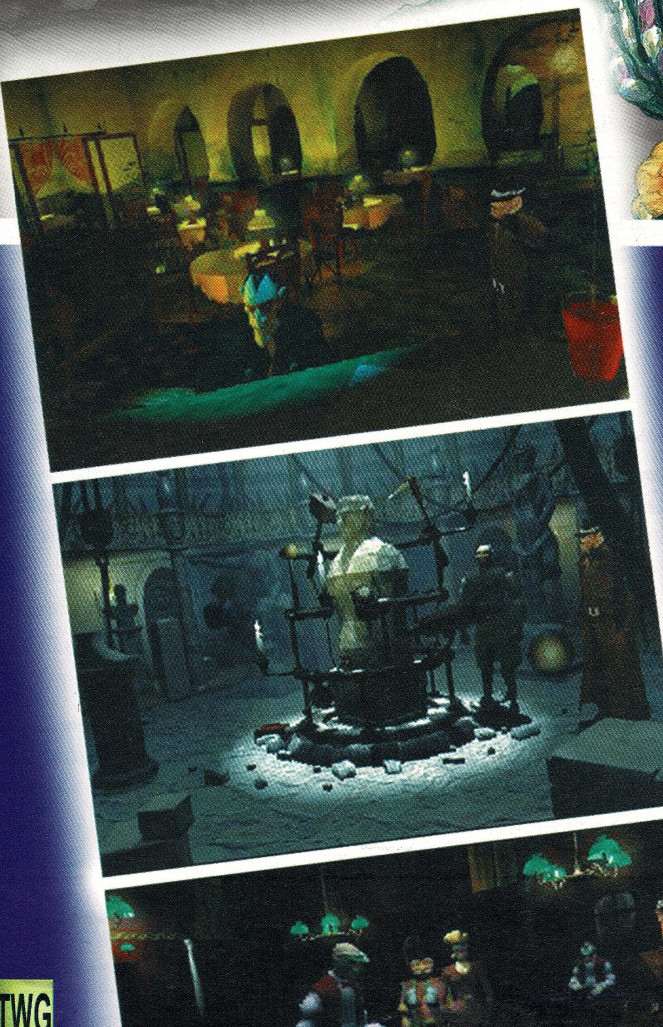
The Official PlayStation Magazine
JANUARY 2000



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The Official PlayStation Magazine

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Newswire

PS2 ads emerge

Japan: Namco and From Software have kicked off ad campaigns for PlayStation 2 titles, with executions for Tekken Tag Tournament, Armored Core 2 and Ridge Racer V all featuring Japanese release dates of March 4th.

Aureal talks new deal

Europe: 3D sound specialist Aureal has appointed Raab Karcher Electronic Systems to distribute its soundcards throughout Europe. "We expect to drive up the use of positional 3D sound technology following our appointment as European distributor for Aureal," said RKES' boss Robin Howell. "Aureal has a truly superior product."

Mobile future for Sega?

Japan: Sega of Japan is believed to be working on a new Dreamcast modem, which will allow the console to be connected to the Net via a mobile phone.

THQ joins hot list

USA: THQ has been added to The Red Chip Review's list of top 'small-cap picks' for 2000. Analysts from the research outfit select 25 firms with market capitalisations under $1.5 billion in emerging or growth areas.

Japan's Ready 2 Rumble

Japan: Midway has signed up Sega of Japan to distribute and market its European and US best-seller Ready 2 Rumble Boxing in Japan. The game shipped last week and will be the first US-developed Dreamcast to be promoted on TV in the territory.

Sega appoints Froning

Germany: Sega Germany has a new marketing director, with Klaus Schulze Froning joining from fashion label Marc O'Polo. "Klaus Schulze Froning is an excellent marketing specialist and I'm glad to welcome him onboard," said Sega Germany's general manager Thomas Zeitner. The firm has also hired Markus Malti as PR assistant.

Konami tops bestseller list

Japan: Konami has been named as the number one best-selling publisher in Japan. The local report lists the top 10 companies ranked by units sold. In order, the list comprises Konami, Square, Nintendo, Sony, Capcom, Namco, D3 Publisher, Bandai, Sega and Enix.

Sega teams with AT&T

Canada: Sega has appointed AT&T as its preferred Internet Service Provider for Dreamcast in Canada.

Call **Lisa Foster** on **01992 535646** with your international news or e-mail lisa.foster@mcvuk.com

New event heralds PS2 launch

Sony still on target for March 4th Japanese roll-out, festival lined up to build consumer hype

THE BUILD-UP to the launch of PlayStation 2 in Japan is heightening, with Sony lining up a specific event next month to demonstrate the console and launch software.

The PlayStation 2 festival takes place at the Makuhari Messe in Chiba Prefecture from February 18-20th. It is open to the trade only for the first day and to the public for the remaining two days.

Sony has so far confirmed some 18 titles to be demonstrated, although it is expected that others will be added in the run-up to the event - and more will be unveiled to the trade only. The initial line-up includes FIFA 2000 (EA Square), GT200 (Sony), Ridge Racer and Tekken Tag Tournament (both Namco), with over 500 PS2 pods being featured.

PlayStation 2 gets its own event next month

Despite widespread rumours about the Japanese launch being delayed, Sony is still insisting that the console will roll out on March 4th. The company claims that this is why it has organised the PlayStation 2 event ahead of the Tokyo Games Show, which runs from March 31st to April 2nd - almost four weeks after the earmarked PS2 launch.

Meanwhile, the British Trade International is once again arranging a British games industry mission to Japan to coincide with the Tokyo Games Show. As well as visiting the exhibition, participants will be given the opportunity to meet key contacts. The mission takes place March 29th -April 6th and costs £1,400 - although a £600 BTI grant is available to each company, bringing the total cost to £800. Those interested should contact Anna Dingley on 07957 540032.

Pacific push for JoWood

AUSTRIAN games firm JoWood Productions has signed a number of distribution agreements in the Far East.

The company has a flurry of new titles scheduled for release this year, including Alien Nations and Traffic Giant and is now looking to expand its distribution in the Far East. Unalis will handle the titles in Taiwan, New Era will cover South East Asia, while MCB Soft has been signed in Korea.

"There has been great interest throughout the world for our products and the selection process to find the right partner in each territory has not been easy," said JoWood's international sales director Peter Hofschroer.

"We are now sure we have found the right partners for the future."

The company will soon announce similar deals across Europe, the US, Australia, South Africa and the Middle East.

Ubi strengthens stock position

UBI SOFT'S continued strong performance has seen the company announce a five-for-one stock split, along with a move from the Secondary March to the Premier March of the Paris Stock Exchange.

The par value of a share from this week will be lowered to Ff2. Shares previously worth Ff10 will be exchanged for five new shares. It brings Ubi Soft's share capital to Ff 26.8m (£2.5m), divided into some 13.4m shares.

Territory Update

Sweden	USA	Germany	Japan
PC CD-ROM	**DREAMCAST**	**PC CD-ROM**	**DREAMCAST**
1. Age of Empires II	1. NFL 2K	1. Tiberian Sun	1. Electronic Plane Wars
2. Quake III Arena	2. NBA 2K	2. Age of Empires II	2. Virtual Striker 2
3. Half Life: O. Force	3. Sonic Adventure	3. Die Siedler 3	3. Sea Man
4. C. Manager 99/00	4. Vigilante 8	4. Rollercoaster Tycoon	4. Let's Play Golf
5. Delta Force 2	5. Sega Bass Fishing	5. Sim City 3000	5. Sunrise Heroes
PLAYSTATION	**PLAYSTATION**	**PLAYSTATION**	**PLAYSTATION**
1. Tomorrow Never Dies	1. Gran Turismo 2	1. Tomb Raider 4	1. Gran Turismo 2
2. NHL 2000	2. Tomorrow Never Dies	2. FIFA 2000	2. Yugio
3. FIFA 2000	3. T. Hawk's Pro Skater	3. Dino Crisis	3. Legend of Dragoon
4. Tarzan	4. NBA Live 2000	4. Formel 1 '99	4. Let's Go By Train
5. Final Fantasy VIII	5. Gran Turismo	5. Final Fantasy VIII	5. Sohma-Toh
NINTENDO 64	**NINTENDO 64**	**NINTENDO**	**NINTENDO 64**
1. Donkey Kong 64	1. Donkey Kong 64	1. Super Smash Bros.	1. Super Smash Bros.
2. Super Smash Bros.	2. Pokemon Snap	2. Donkey Kong 64	2. Super Robot Battle
3. Mario Kart	3. Wrestlemania 2000	3. Rayman 2	3. Bombing Bomberman 2
4. Goldeneye	4. Super Smash Bros.	4. Mario Party	4. Star Twins Adventure
5. Jetforce Gemini	5. Namco Museum 64	5. Jet Force Gemini	5. Pokemon Stadium 2
Source: Manual	Source: NPD TRSTS	Source: VUD/Media Control	Source: Famitsu/64Dream

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TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE

Dreamcast

MD fires PlayStation 2 warning

Silicon Dreams boss confident of another Sony success, but warns of high expectations and financial concerns for new format

WITH INDUSTRY CONFIDENCE in PlayStation 2 running high, a warning voice has emerged from Banbury-based Silicon Dreams.

MCV's poll of studio heads (*MCV 14/1*) painted a rosy picture for the console, but Gavin Cheshire, Silicon Dreams' managing director, has a few reservations. While he is also backing the console, he is concerned about its implications for the industry as a whole.

"The industry seems to be bracing itself for an increase in development team sizes and in costs with the advent of PS2," he told MCV. "Historically, teams have got bigger with the advent of newer and more complex hardware, but the general consensus amongst publishers and developers is that PS2 games will cost in the order of £1m per project. Does this mean my game now has to sell at least 300,000 units to break even?"

"There are 60-odd million PlayStations out there and the amount of games that are launched and achieve those sort of sales figures or more are still low," he continued. "So if we all thought the games industry was turning towards producing only licensed products and sequels, don't expect that trend to alter much."

Cheshire also warns that some of the pre-release hype for PlayStation 2 may be a little OTT.

Gavin Cheshire: "PC has caught up with PS2 now."

"It's bollocks to say we're upping the stakes in graphics and technologies with PS2," he said.

"Emotion this and real-time that - forgive me, but haven't we all been doing that since day one?"

"PS2 looks impressive because it's a console under £200 – well, we hope it is. Technically and graphically, if the PC was where Sony said it was against PS2 last March at the launch, it has caught up now and will be surpassing it before the PS2 arrives in the shops here," he warned.

"At Silicon Dreams we've been utilising techniques and technologies for current and future products that became buzz words last March. PS2 will offer some brilliant opportunities for console development, but only in the same way that the PC does."

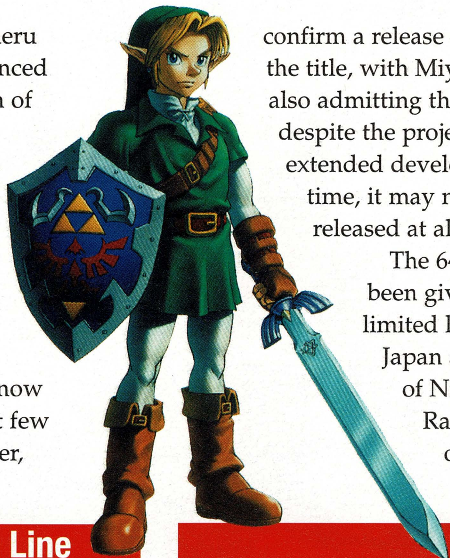
Zelda DD's future in doubt

ZELDA creator Shigheru Miyamoto has announced that the 64DD version of the game is virtually complete – but Nintendo has yet to confirm a definite release.

The legendary designer claims the code is in its final stages with the team now implementing the last few level designs. However, Nintendo has yet to confirm a release date for the title, with Miyamoto also admitting that, despite the project's extended development time, it may not be released at all.

The 64DD has been given a limited launch in Japan as part of Nintendo's RandNet online games experiment. The CD add-on is only available to customers registering via the Internet and is part of Nintendo's first dip into online – possibly to test the waters before its next generation Dolphin system is launched.

It is thought that Nintendo is fudging the issue of Zelda DD's release as it is keen to keep the emphasis on RandNet's online capabilities. Sources indicate it is worried users may join merely to play the latest instalment of Miyamoto's masterpiece.



EA kicks off with FIFA PlayStation 2

EA'S FIRST PLAYSTATION 2 title is an update of FIFA 2000.

Although the UK machine isn't expected to hit stores until September, EA has opted for a conversion of its Christmas best seller as opposed to the 2001 update, which hits existing formats in November.

The game will be unveiled at the PlayStation 2 Festival at Japan's Makuhari Messe on February 19-20th. The show is being used to display the first titles for the new Sony console.

Production Line

PS2 Middleware launches

Metrowerks has released its CodeWarrior utility for PlayStation 2. The software comprises editors, project manager, browser, assembler and compilers and can also be used to debug titles. It will be followed by a complete suite of PlayStation 2 tools.

Criterion targets US

Criterion Software has joined forces with US firm Hammersmith Technologies to distributes its Renderware 3 3D toolkit in North America. As part of the deal, Hammersmith will also handle the technical support for US customers.

Rage rallies DiD

Newly acquired DiD, freshly renamed Rage Warrington, is preparing a rally game. Provisionally entitled Rage Rally, the game will use advanced polygonal routines and utilise multi-player options for online play. Rage Warrington is also working to add non-linear elements to the basic racing action.

In The Studio

Going for Gold

Konami's sequel is looking to hop, skip and jump up the charts

Product: Track and Field 2
Developer: Konami
Publisher: Konami
Available: February

The Game: International Track and Field 2 pits armchair athletes against each other over twelve sporting competitions. Veteran challenges like the 100m sprint, hammer, javelin, pole vault, long jump and 50m swim are joined by modern endeavours including canoeing, sprint and middle distance cycling and weight lifting.

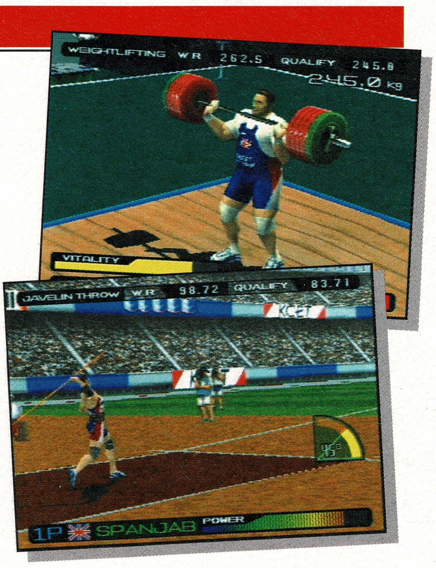
Brand or Licence: The awaited follow-up to one of the granddaddies of virtual sport.

Product Strengths: Attractive 3D visuals get the best out of the PlayStation plus the inherent multi-player strengths of the game should stand it in good stead on a console still lacking multi-player gems. 2000 is an Olympic year too, so the timing is perfect.

Question Marks: While Konami has the heritage, UK developer Attention to Detail has the official Olympic 2000 rights and stadium plans, which could prove a draw to mass-market punters raised on FIFA-style branded product. The medical acceptance of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome could also throw the safety of the games' frenetic button bashing into doubt. Only kidding.

Development Detail: The animations are based on the motion-captured moves of the 100 metre record holder Maurice Green.

In Their Own Words: "Stunning aesthetic realism coupled with solid gameplay makes International Track and Field 2 the perfect bridge between the old and new generations of games consoles," a Konami spokesperson.


WEIGHTLIFTING W R 262.5 QUALIFY 245.8
245.0 kg
VITALITY
JAVELIN THROW W R 98.72 QUALIFY 83.71
1P SPANJAB
POWER

Konami puts the pressure on ATD's Olympics title

Prognosis: Konami is on of a roll after ISS Evolution and it's hard to imagine it'll get this one wrong. If only more sports sequels came around as rarely.

You must be **dreaming.**

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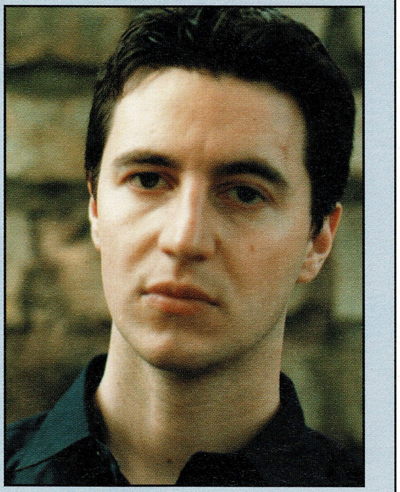
Code Warrior

Unoriginal Sin

The industry grows fat on franchises, but it's innovation that stimulates the appetite. Owain Bennallack calls for more new thinking from the development community...



WEARILY, I leave the game to write my latest column for MCV. In 'pause' mode it could be any of more than a dozen such games I've played recently. No better, not much worse.

Admittedly, a journalist asking for more innovation in games development isn't very original either. Nonetheless, new consoles are on the horizon, and early adopters seem more willing than ever to try something new.

More crudely, the lottery of publishing in today's climate means your game is almost certainly going to be a commercial also-ran. So why not go for critical acclaim - and just maybe a blockbuster?

As far as I can see, there are really only two ways to make a great game.

First, you can try to make the very best version of an existing idea. Namco's brilliant Soul Calibur for the Dreamcast was amongst the best games of 1999.

But Soul Calibur isn't truly innovative. It doesn't just hark back to Soul Blade, or even Tekken 3, but rather to the whole history of fighting games. You can sum up the design brief for Soul Calibur as 'make the best fighting game ever'. A similar example is Quake III: Arena.

The alternative route is to create something new. But the question is how to achieve critical and commercial success? After all, we've all been around long enough to welcome updates of FIFA ahead of the dozen glitchy 'original' adolescent takes on Rollerball of yesteryear.

> ***How do you achieve success with something new? After all, we've all been around long enough to welcome updates of FIFA ahead of a dozen glitchy 'original' takes of yesteryear.***

One theme I've noticed is that truly original games are usually game ideas second. First and foremost, the designer will say 'wouldn't it be cool if...' and it would be just as cool if it could be done in real life or in a film. Or, of course, if it could actually be done in a game.

Wouldn't it be cool if I was a bad guy driving down the wrong side of the street? (Driver) Wouldn't it be cool if a whole race of people worshipped me? (Black and White) Wouldn't it be cool to see the adventures of a cross between Tank Girl and Indiana Jones (Tomb Raider) or to go on secret missions in World War 2? (Hidden and Dangerous).

This is not the same as a 'new spin'. A new spin on Command and Conquer - for example, something like'Age of Eskimos', 'Pitch Invasion', or even 'Ice Cream Van Wars' - isn't likely to result in an innovative game. But a new idea about war itself might.

This is obvious, you say. Clearly making 'not quite' the best version of Mario 64 or lazily porting Sim City to Mars is a surefire route to mediocrity. Okay - so why do so many projects start off that way? No, it's not just the marketing department.

The Gallagher brothers have something of a tough job bettering their heroes The Beatles, but Sony should easily beat Gran Turismo with Gran Turismo 2000 on the PlayStation 2 format.

This phenomenon encourages developers to always think in terms of what's gone before.

Sure, once you've decided to make your cool idea into a game it's important to look at what you can learn from the past. But for real originality, the idea itself really must come first. "I want to do 'this'" - the idea - comes before - "let's do it like 'that'" - the game.

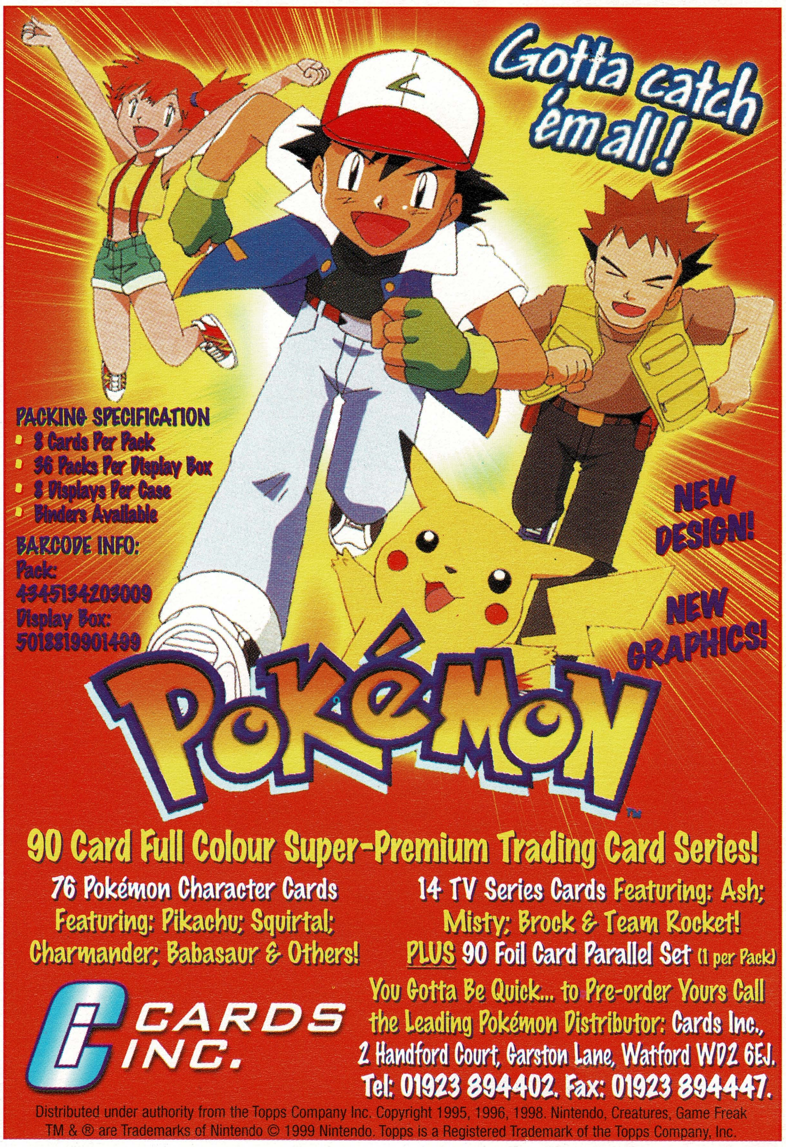
Let's do it like this, not like that.

Owain Bennallack
Owain.bennallack@virgin.net

URwired.com

Following a complaint from Core Design Limited, URwired.com have agreed to discontinue their advertising campaign featuring a pastiche of Lara Croft and two slavering dogs. The parties amicably reached settlement without the need for court proceedings.

Mattias Lamotte
URwired.com
Managing Director



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To Easter & Beyond

Most of the New Year granny-money will be spent by now, but there's a strong line-up of games still to come over the next few weeks and an expanded installed base of console and PC hardware owners to sell to. **MCV** provides a round-up of the key revenue earners in Q1…

SPACE RANGER
LIGHTYEAR

Both Activision and Infogrames are pinning their Q1 hopes on the assorted versions of Toy Story 2. The games will be released alongside the film on February 4th

Activision

Highlights: Activision continues its console push with Tony Hawk Skateboarding for Game Boy and N64. Already a hit on PlayStation, the new versions arrive on March 24th.

Toy Story 2 should also be big on PlayStation and N64. Both versions will be released to coincide with the UK premier of the film on February 4th, ensuring plenty of exposure. Also look out for the popular Vigilante 8 on Dreamcast and N64.

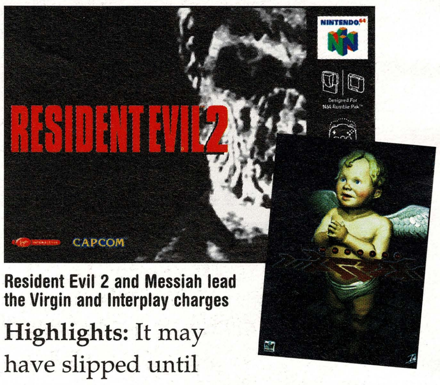
Also Coming: Battlezone II (PC, January 29th), Quake III Arena (Mac, February), Vigilante 8 (N64, February 18th), Soldier of Fortune (PC, February 18th), Toy Story 2 (GBC, February 25th).

SNK

Highlights: Sonic's Pocket Adventure is the stand out title and arrives next month. The Spiky one is well represented and the title boasts classic platform action and gameplay. The two SNK Vs Capcom titles are welcome additions to the Neo Geo library.

Also Coming: SNK Vs Capcom: Match of the Millennium (NGP, February), SNK Vs Capcom: Card Fighters Clash (NGP, February).

Interplay/Virgin/Titus



Resident Evil 2 and Messiah lead the Virgin and Interplay charges

Highlights: It may have slipped until March 17th, but Shiny's Messiah is still a PC highlight. Baldur's Gate for PlayStation in March is also of note, with the PC classic surviving the transition to console surprisingly well.

Titus is touting Roadsters for Dreamcast in March.

Virgin is looking to the Dreamcast and N64 versions of Resident Evil 2 to entice retail. Both conversions are stunning, with the N64 version arriving January 28th and the Dreamcast game on February 18th.

Also coming: Dragon's Blood (Dreamcast, March), Casper (GBC, March), MDK2 (Dreamcast, March 10th), Caesars Palace (PlayStation/Dreamcast, March 31st), EWJ 3D (PlayStation, March 31st). Jimmy White's 2: Cueball (PlayStation, February 4th).

Take 2

Jim Henson's
Muppets
GAME BOY COLOR
LICENSED BY Nintendo
TAKE 2
ONLY FOR GAME BOY COLOR

Highlights: Conversions of existing titles form the backbone of Take 2's Q1 range. March, however, sees the release of The Muppets for Game Boy Colour, a perfectly targeting licence if ever there was one. Jim Henson's cloth creations are back in vogue and Take 2's game will appeal to younger users with its simplistic arcade content.
Also coming: Railroad Tycoon 2 (PlayStation, January), Grudge Warriors (PlayStation, January), Rising Sun (PlayStation, February), Wild Metal Country (Dreamcast, March), Silicon Valley (PlayStation, March).

3DO

Highlights: 3DO begins its UK assault with a strong line-up of Army Men titles. A PlayStation pincer movement involving Army Men 3D and Army Men: Air Attack storms retail on January 28th and February 11th respectively, with Sarge's Heroes for N64 on March 10th.
Also coming: Battletank: Global Assault (N64/GBC, February; PlayStation, March), Army Men Sarge's Heroes (PlayStation, March 31st), Heroes of Might and Magic (PlayStation, March 10th; PC, March 24th).

Midway

Highlights: Midway is making the most of its successful Ready 2 Rumble boxing franchise. The Game Boy version is due in February and should be a big seller amongst portable pugilists - with Midway making full use of the handheld's Rumble Pak facility with a special cartridge. The company continues its support of Dreamcast with Four-Wheel Thunder in March. The Kalisto-designed title should certainly impress the off-road racing fraternity.
Also Coming: Arcade Party Pack (PlayStation, March), Hydro Thunder (N64, March).

Ubi Soft

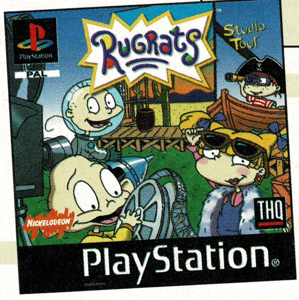
Highlights: With Leeds riding high in the Premiership, Ubi Soft's David O'Leary-endorsed Football World Manager 2000 couldn't come at a better time. Ubi Soft is deliberately raising the profile of the World Manager brand as it looks to compete against the strident Championship Manager and initial reports are that the Ubi Soft title is a worthy challenger. It arrives on January 21st.
Also Coming: Grandia (PlayStation, February 2nd), Evolution (Dreamcast, February 25th).

Sega

Highlights: Sega still seems to be relying on ports from its arcade division, but with titles like Virtua Striker 2 Ver.2000.1 (January 21st) and Crazy Taxi (February 25th), we're not complaining.

The best looking football game around, one notable feature of the title is the ability to save goals to VMU for viewing via the excellent replay feature.

Crazy Taxi should also excel at retail, giving Dreamcast owners a driving experience equal to GTI's Driver.
Also Coming: NBA 2000 (Dreamcast, March 3rd), Red Dog (Dreamcast, March 3rd).



JVC

Highlights: Victory Boxing III is the obvious contender from JVC though the retail ring is far more crowded nowadays, with EA and Midway offering alternatives. However, JVC has several fans in its corner and Victory III looks sharp. It arrives on March 17th.
Also Coming: Psychic Force II (PlayStation, February 18th), Vampire Hunter D (PlayStation, March 31st).

Eidos

Highlights: Eidos' hard work with affiliates gives it the most exciting release schedule of all the companies featured.

Undoubted star of the Eidos show is Resident Evil 3: Nemesis. Eidos has snatched the series from under Virgin's nose just as it hits its stride. Taking place in the middle of events of Resident Evil 2, the game expands upon the zombie killing and puzzle-solving aspects of its predecessors by moving from the claustrophobic corridors of an old house or police station to the open streets of Raccoon City. Watch it fly on February 18th…

The PC version of Final Fantasy VIII also hits stores on the 18th and will wow the PC sector. And who could forget Lara's Game Boy Tomb Raider debut in March?
Also coming: Dragon Warrior Monsters (GBC, February), Fear Effect (PlayStation, February), Urban Chaos (PlayStation, February), F1 World Grand Prix (PC, February), UEFA Champions League 99/00 (PlayStation, March 3rd), Tomb Raider 3: Platinum (PlayStation, March 10th), Tomb Raider 3: Premier Collection (PC, March 10th), Thief 2 (PC, March 17th), UEFA Champions League 99/00 (PC, March).

THQ

Highlights: With the Rugrats franchise elevating THQ up the publisher super-league, new titles for Game Boy Colour and PlayStation arrive in February. RugRats: Studio Tour takes a behind the scenes look at the cartoon while RugRats: Time Travellers is an arcade title.

THQ also weighs in with another impressive addition to its WWF roster. WWF Smackdown continues the franchise in fine style on N64 in March, with all the latest wrestlers available and a host of rib-cracking, body-slamming moves. It may be more of the same but N64 owners seem to lap it up. THQ's support of the Game Boy also continues, with FIFA Pocket Manager – its first management title.
Also coming: Micro Machines Twin Turbo (GBC, February), NHL 2000 (GBC, February), Yoda Stories (GBC, March), Croc (GBC, March).

Hasbro

Highlights: Hasbro's hopes are pinned on old favourite, Simon the Sorcerer. The adventure returns on March 17th in a fully 3D form with 50 different characters to interact with.
Also Coming: Missile Command (PSX, February 4th), Nerf Arena (PC, February), Risk II (PC, Feb.y), Majesty (PC, March).

Codemasters

Highlights: With the Colin McRae sequel now scheduled for April, all eyes will turn to Micro Maniacs – the latest instalment in the Micro Machines franchise. Players guide one of several small monsters around a series of everyday levels.

Perfectly timed for Easter and extremely entertaining, Micro Maniacs will go down a storm.

World Championship Snooker sees the Coders take on the might of Virgin's Jimmy White franchise - and is backed by a licence from the sport's WSA body. The Leamington firm is certain 'it can do a Brian Lara' on the sedate sport and, on past form (Lara Cricket, Lomu Rugby, Sampras Tennis…), who'd argue against it?
Also coming: Insane (PC/Internet, March).

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE: Q1 GAME RELEASES

Electronic Arts

Highlights: The Sims, Maxis' stunning 'people simulator', is released on February 11th and deserves to be a success if only for trying something new.

A key addition to EA's sports line up is F1 2000 in March with EA producing its first FOA –endorsed Formula One title.

Also coming: Superbike 2000 (PlayStation, February 11th), Cricket 2000 (PlayStation, February 12th), Rally Championship (PlayStation, February 18th), Nox (PC, February 25th), Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2000 (PC/PlayStation, February 25th), Theme Park Word (PlayStation, March 4th), Rugby 200 (PC/PlayStation, March 31st).

Microsoft

Highlights: Starlancer is a space combat sim featuring over 80 different spacecraft and more than 30 missions. The online RPG Asheron's Call has been a big success in the States and will impress here with its multiplayer gameplay.

Also Coming: Motocross Madness II (PC, March).

GTI

Highlights: The Duke returns on March 31st in a new third person shooter, amusingly called Duke Nukem: Planet of the Babes.

The Game Boy gets its own interpretation of Driver in March.

Also Coming: Discworld Noir (PlayStation, February 11th), Imperium Galactica II (PC, February 11th), Team Alligator (PC, February 18th), Iron Plague TA add-on (PC, March 3rd), Oddworld Adventure 2: Abe's Exoddus (GBC, March 24th), Metal Fatigue (PC, March 24th), TA Expansion Pack (PC, March).

Acclaim

Highlights: Acclaim returns to the wrestling ring with Extreme Championship Wrestling on March 3rd. Having lost the WWF rights to THQ, Acclaim is pulling out all the stops with a large ECW marketing push and launches the PlayStation, N64, Dreamcast and Game Boy Colour versions simultaneously.

The South Park range acts as back up, with the belated South Park Rally finally rolling into stores in February.

Also coming: NBA Jam 2000 (N64, January 21st), Re-Volt (Dreamcast, January 21st), Armada (Dreamcast, January 28th), Tee Off (Dreamcast, January 28th), Football Manager (GBC, February 5th), South Park Rally (N64, February 28th), Bust A Move 4 (Dreamcast, February).

Infogrames

Highlights: Infogrames returns to the field with the PlayStation version of Ronaldo V-Football. It will have its work cut out if it is to compete with ISS Evolution, but football games are good sellers and the licence is certain to attract attention.

The deal for selected Disney titles bears its first fruit in January, Toy Story 2 for PC.

Also coming: Beetle Crazy Cup (PC, February), Slave Zero (PC, February), Rally Masters (PlayStation, February), Speedy Gonzales (GBC, February), Demolition Racer (PC, March), Premier Manager 2000 (PlayStation, March).

Konami

Highlights: True football connoisseurs will be cheering on ISS Evolution, which arrives for PlayStation on February 25th. Konami's Japanese team has pulled out all the stops to produce a game that makes FIFA 2000 look like a playground kickaround. It will be huge – Man Utd huge.

Beatmania is a conversion of the excellent musical coin-op, with Konami supplying a mini mixing desk peripheral with the game. Track and Field is another button-bashing Olympian, but recognition is growing and it already has a useful six-month head start over Eidos' official Sydney 2000 title.

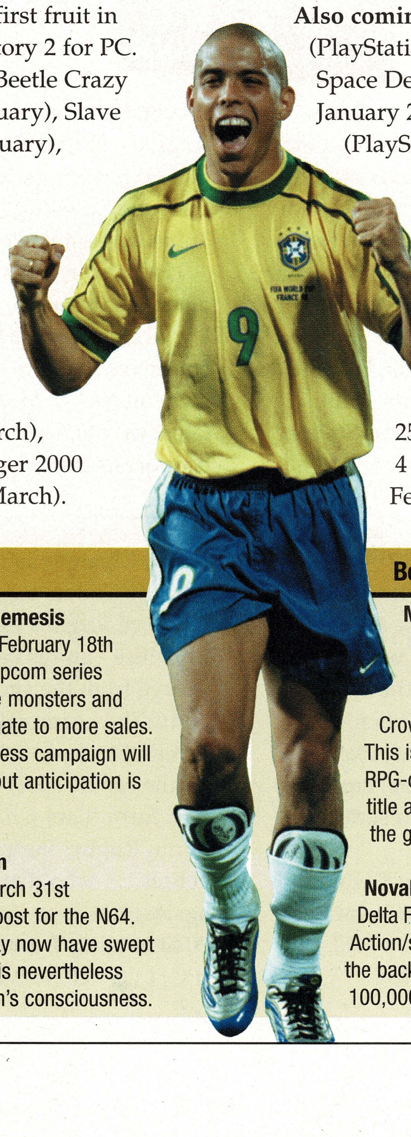
Also coming: Deadly Skies (Dreamcast, February 18th), Konami Winter Games (GBC, February 25th), Castlevania: Legacy of Darkness (N64, February), Game Boy Collection Vol 2 (GBC, February), NBA In The Zone 2000 (PlayStation/GBC/N64, March, Beatmania (PlayStation, March), Azure Dreams (GBC, March), Cross Country Racing (GBC, March), Vandal Hearts 2 (PlayStation, March).

Sony

Highlights: To say hopes are high for Gran Turismo 2 is an understatement. With its predecessor easily bypassing the 2m units mark, that the delayed sequel will hit the top spot can be taken as read. Out next Friday, this will sell strongly long after its initial retail impact.

Sony has also acquired the fancied Rollcage: Stage 2 for a March 24th release and should be a steady performer if it gets good marketing support.

Also coming: Ace Combat 3 (PlayStation, January 21st), Space Debris (PlayStation, January 28th), Tiny Tank (PlayStation, February 4th), Ehrgeiz (PlayStation, February 11th), Shadow Madness (PlayStation, February 25th), Cool Boarders 4 (PlayStation, February 25th), NHL Face Off (PlayStation, March 3rd), Saga Frontier (PlayStation, March 3rd), Colony Wars Vengeance (PlayStation, March 24th), Star Ixiom (PlayStation, March 31st)



Nintendo

Highlights: Pokemon was last year's sales sensation for Nintendo and the phenomenon will continue with the release of Pokemon Stadium for N64 at the end of March. The game allows those collectable creatures to battle it out in full 3D and includes RPG elements as well as mini-games. Included is an innovative hardware add-on, the Transfer Pak, which allows data to be passed from the Game Boy Pokemon games for use in the N64 version. Excellent.

The N64 will also receive its first Namco game in Ridge Racer 64. It's a little late, but Namco's Racer heritage should help sales.

Also Coming: Beauty and the Beast (GBC, January 21st), Wario Land 3 (GBC, February 25th), Game and Watch Gallery 3 (GBC, March 24th).

Guaranteed Blockbusters

MCV's panel of experts select the three titles certain to wow retail in Q1…

Gran Turismo 2
Sony, PlayStation, January 28th
Without doubt, this will be the first big hit of 2000. Gran Turismo 2 doesn't look hugely different from the original, but in terms of content it is unbeatable. A rally mode and numerous off-road courses take the game into Colin McRae territory, where it will surely see off all newcomers. The original is still a huge seller at retail on the Platinum label. Expect this one to fly off the shelves next week.

Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Eidos, PlayStation, February 18th
The third in the Capcom series and the best. More monsters and more gore will equate to more sales. A strong TV and press campaign will raise awareness, but anticipation is already high.

Pokemon Stadium
Nintendo, N64, March 31st
A much-needed boost for the N64. Pokemon fever may now have swept the country, but it is nevertheless infecting the nation's consciousness.

Best Of The Rest

MCV offers a round-up of other new games due to arrive at retail between now and the end of March…

Zablac
Tzar: Burden of the Crown (PC, February)
This is an mpressive-looking RPG-cum-real-time strategy title and will appeal to fans of the genre.

NovaLogic
Delta Force 2 (PC, February 4th)
Action/strategy epic arrives on the back of US sales of over 100,000 units.

Midas
B Hunter (PC, January 14th)
Futuristic bounty hunting action.
Silkolene Honda Motocross GP (PC, 18th February)
A highly promising motocross simulation.

Havas
Half-Life: Generations (PC, February 11th)
Value triple pack containing Half-Life, Team Fortress Classic and Opposing Forces.

A 10 year old boy who always cleans up

1999 Sales Figures

900,547	Game Boys
2,226,000	Software
500,000	Pokémon
98.6%	Market Share

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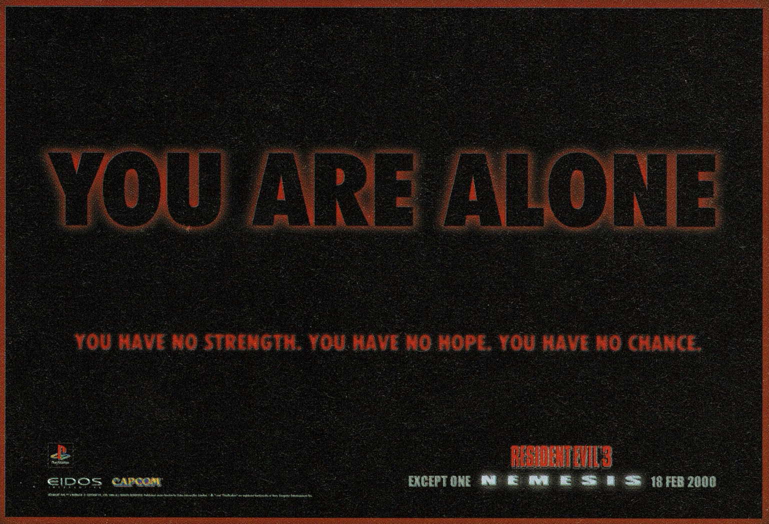

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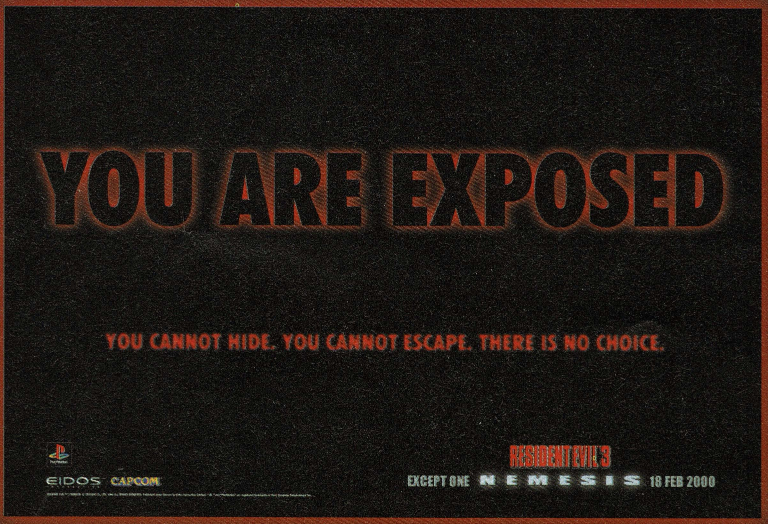

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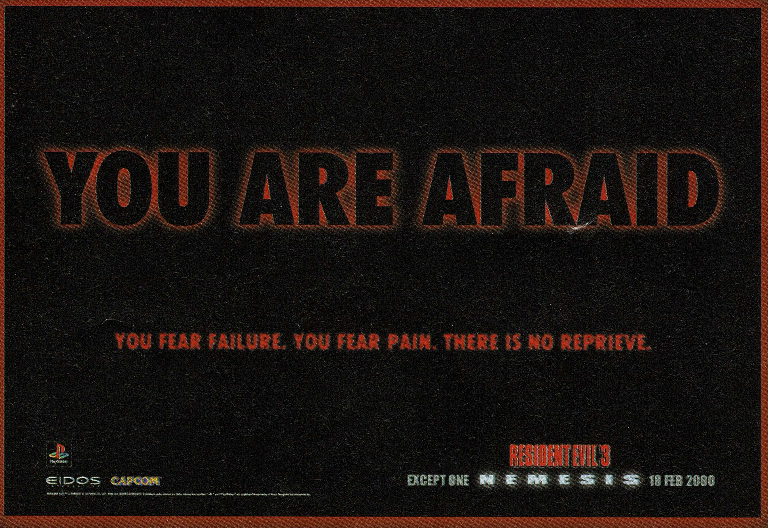

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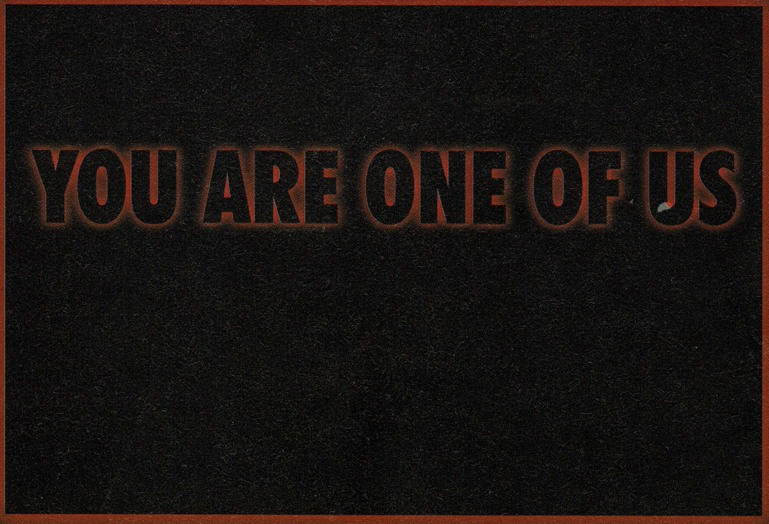

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Milia

A content event rather than Olympia-style expo, Milia has clearly worked hard to answer those who claim that it has operated on the periphery of the interactive entertainment industry. This year there is more representation from and dedication to our market than ever before. **Tim Green** reports…

GARAUDE: "Whether it's AOL linking up with EA or NTL working with Hasbro, the fact is that the games industry is right at the heart of latest developments in digital media, broadband Internet and interactive TV."

ENGLISH VISITORS to the last Milia will not forget the event in a hurry, but they may want to.

The organisers made two fatal errors. First they enticed us down to the clement Cote D'Azur in our lightweight linen jackets only to shower us in snowfall. And then they screened the England versus France friendly match on a huge TV screen in one of the main conference rooms. We lost 2-0.

One can only hope that Milia 2000 will hold fewer horrors. Meteorologically, of course, anything can happen. But as for the show itself, Reed Midem can promise perhaps the broadest and boldest programme since games became central to the event.

> ***This year's Milia plays a significant role in projecting interactive entertainment firms as the partner of choice for all serious players within the new wired economy.***

The changes are pretty radical and indicate that the organisers have listened very carefully to suggestions from visitors by revising Milia's price structure, better integrating games exhibitors within the main floorspace and separating the conference from the show itself.

Judging by the extent of these changes, observers might assume that Milia is still struggling to find its USP for the games community. This would be harsh. In fact, it's a fairer assessment that the show is now a genuine fixture for many publishers and developers.

But what is Milia for? It's a "content market at which partners can meet and do business" says Reed Midem. Emphatically not, then, the retail-led excitement of ECTS or the chest-beating beauty parade of E3.

Of course, Milia has always been described this way even when CD-i represented the platform of choice. What's changed is that the extraordinary popularity of next generation console systems has made games (rather than music or TV or movies) the true standard bearer of interactivity.

Meanwhile, the emergence of online has brought within reach the notion of convergence which started a decade ago.

So when "partners meet and do business" it's games firms which hold the greatest appeal.

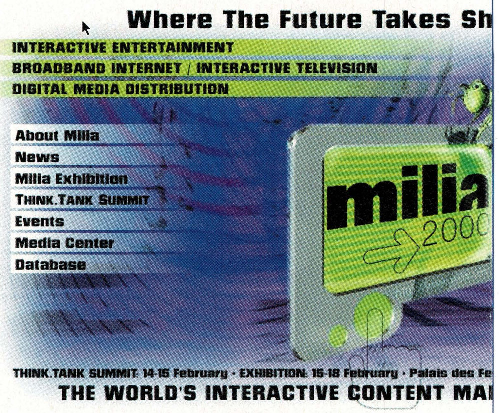
Milia's executive director Laurine Garaude says: "If you look at where the creativity is, it's in games development. The major deals spell it out. Whether it's AOL linking up with EA or NTL working with Hasbro, the fact is that the games industry is right at the heart of developments in interactive entertainment, digital media, broadband Internet and interactive TV."

To foster these associations Milia has designed a 'Think.Tank' conference in which interactive entertainment sessions line up alongside sessions on Internet and interactive television, online advertising and e-commerce and high-speed networks.

As mentioned earlier this programme has been detached from the show itself and will take place in the two days before Milia 2000 kicks off. This should be welcomed by all because it serves two purposes.

First it allows delegates to visit all the sessions without missing appointments or events on the main floorspace.

Second, it permits Milia to introduce new entry tariffs, reducing the price significantly for those who only want to pay for the Think.Tank conference not the show and vice versa.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THE WORLD'S INTERACTIVE CONTENT MA

As Milia develops, it increasingly taps into converging markets

Importantly, Milia's increased focus on the conference gained a thumbs up from the Interactive Software Federation Europe which has confirmed it will co-produce the games programme.

The ISFE - which is an umbrella trade organisation for Europe whose members include AISI in Italy, ELSPA in the UK, NVPI in the Netherlands, SELL in France and VUD in Germany - has been looking for some time to launch an annual conference for the games software industry.

With Think.Tank it comes ready made. Expect sessions on the subjects closest to its heart, such as the fight against piracy plus copyright and trading issues.

The conference will also play a significant role in projecting the interactive entertainment business as the partner of choice for all serious players within the new wired economy.

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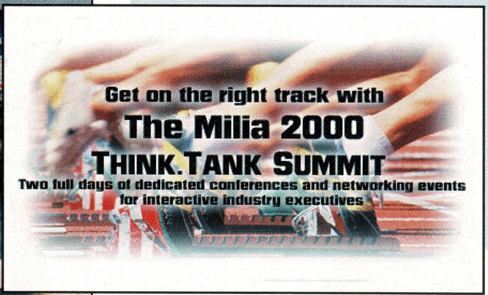
Games will move to the new Riviera Hall this year

The Think.Tank Conference

At Milia 2000, the traditional conference programme will kick off before the main exhibition for the first time.

The separation gives visitors the chance to attend all the sessions they want without fear of missing someone or something important. Think.Tank takes place over two days, from Monday February 14th to Tuesday February 15th.

It's a three-track programme. Alongside the games summit will be a conference track for High-Speed Networks, Internet and Interactive Television and another for Online Advertising and E-Commerce.



Get on the right track with
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THINK.TANK SUMMIT
Two full days of dedicated conferences and networking events for interactive industry executives

A SHOW FOR DEVELOPERS

As the image of developers as the overworked, under-appreciated drones of the games industry recedes further into the distant past, Milia 2000 is dangling all manner of perfectly rendered carrots to get talent to the show. These include:

One-Day Conference Programme
This is not part of Think.Tank and takes place on February 16th. Sessions include Business Skills for Games Developers and Business Skills for Web Site and Online Content Developers.

Developer Village
Sponsored by Microsoft, the village will provide first-time exhibitors with the opportunity of demonstrating their latest projects on a counter top stand for the special price of Ff3,500.

Developer Lounge
Designed for those without stands to present projects or simply schmooze the money men.

Developer Competition
The UK's Edge magazine and France's Joystick/Joypad are jointly organising this project to discover talent among their respective readerships. Winners will get free accommodation, transport and entry to Milia 2000 plus the chance to demonstrate their work at the Microsoft-sponsored Developer Village.

The organisers desperately want developers to come to Milia and it's easy to see why. How can a show be truly about content if it lacks creative talent?

And what other international forum can offer publishers and investors the chance to "discover" development riches?

The new talent pavilion at Milia 1999 was a start. But this year's show goes much further offering cut-price stands to developers, special admission rates, awards, a dedicated conference programme, Microsoft-sponsored workshops and even a free lounge in which developers without a stand can put on demonstrations.

The organisers clearly expect a strong showing from developers to act as a magnet to publishers.

Another incentive will be a significant improvement in the Milia Games floorspace.

At the last show this was a marquee, separate from the main Palais de Festival, which might have seemed like a good idea on paper but for many exhibitors gave the impression that games companies were peripheral to the main business going on inside.

At Milia 2000 they will be housed inside the impressive new Riviera Hall extension within the main exhibition building.

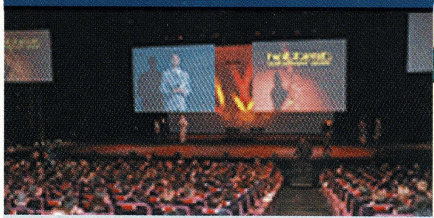
Reed Midem is confident its many innovations will cement Milia's growing stature within the global games community.

It's certainly talking up the show by predicting more than 1,000 exhibiting companies and over 7,000 visitors. MCV will be represented, too, at booth R13.26

Milia 2000 will take place from February 15th-18th at the Palais des Festivals in Cannes. The Think.Tank conference runs from February 14th-15th.

For more information, readers should call Ted Baracos on 020 7528 0086, email info@milia.com or visit www.milia.com

The Cost Of Entry



In response to raised eyebrows at the traditional Milia tariffs, the organisers have unveiled a broader array of prices. At the top end they are no cheaper. But the many options now available make admission far more affordable than before.

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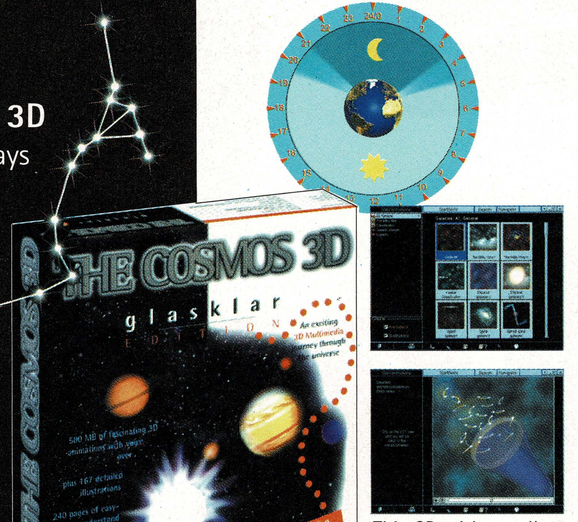
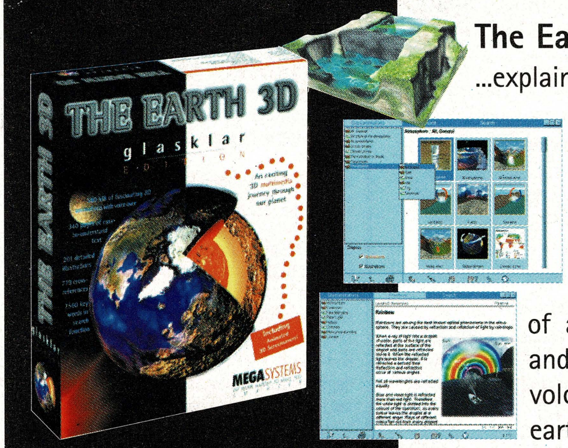
Didn't you always want to under-stand the structure of our solar system? What are galactics clusters, and who can explain the Milky Way to me?

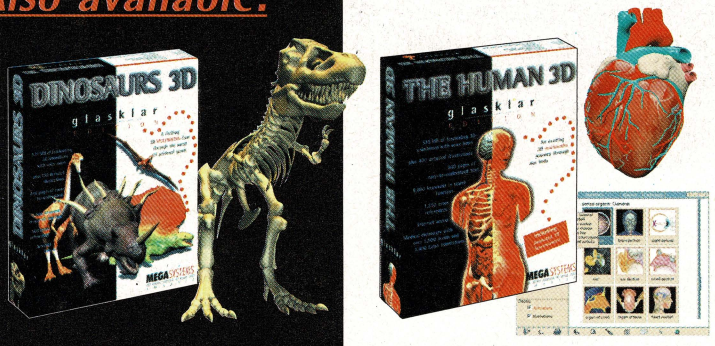


This CD with excellent 3D animations and outstanding graphics answers virtually all your questions on the universe.



The Earth 3D...
...explains the origin, structure and development of our planet in a fascinating manner. Look into the eye of a hurricane and experience volcanoes and earthquakes.

Also available:



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CONSUMER WATCH

Launched last week, ConsumerWatch is a weekly analysis of consumer buying intentions exclusive to MCV. In association with Games Domain, we will ask the public which software releases they intend to purchase over the next month. We will also print the results of a topical question each week too. It's clearly a part of our market-leading publication that no one in retail or marketing can afford to miss…

Q **Which two current or future software releases are you intending to purchase over the next month?**

This Week	Last Week	Title	1st Choice	2nd Choice	Total Score
1	3	Gran Turismo 2	54	32	140
2	4	Final Fantasy VIII	35	30	100
3	1	Tomb Raider 4	35	25	95
4	2	Quake 3 Arena	33	28	94
5	12	Resident Evil 3	23	24	70
6	7	Diablo 2	21	18	60
7	13	Grand Theft Auto 2	16	17	49
8	11	FIFA 2000	19	10	48
9	20	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	19	9	47
10	6	Age of Empires 2	16	12	44
11	10	Unreal Tournament	12	16	40
12	5	Donkey Kong Country 64	15	4	34
13	9	Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear	14	6	34
14	17	Planescape: Torment	11	9	31
15	-	Crash Team Racing	12	2	26
16	-	Homeworld	9	8	26
17	16	Tomorrow Never Dies	8	10	26
18	-	Driver	8	9	25
19	15	WWF Wrestlemania 2000	10	4	24
20	-	Cool Boarders 4	9	2	20

Total number of consumers who voted: **765**
Voting took place between: **Sat January 8th & Fri January 14th**

Scoring System: *Two points for every consumer voting a title as his/her first choice purchase, one point for every second choice*

Q **With publishers and developers already working on PlayStation 2 products, do you expect a drop in quality of software for PlayStation 1?**
Yes: 45%
No: 55%

Analysis

It's quiet, but GT2 is revving up

MIRRORING the massive drop in retail sales that has accompanied the post-Christmas period, consumers do seem to want that pause for breath that was mentioned in this column last week.

Some 765 consumers picked out their most wanted titles for us in the week ending January 14th, which is still an excellent quantity from which to draw conclusions but down on the number of children and adults responding during our ConsumerWatch trial which ran from mid-November through to New Year.

As anticipated, Gran Turismo 2 jumps from third spot to top of the pile. It's out next Friday, and will probably hold its position here for a fortnight at least.

Capcom's excellent Resident Evil 3, due via Eidos on PlayStation next month, is surely Gran Turismo's biggest rival. It rises this week from No.12 to No.5 and should continue to climb as time ticks by.

> ***The excellent Res Evil 3, due in mid-February, is surely Gran Turismo 2's biggest rival.***

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater (No.9) has risen following publicity surrounding Crave's grabbing of the Dreamcast rights. It ships in Q2 for the Sega system and also continues to sell steadily for Activision on PlayStation.

At No.20, Cool Boarders 4 makes its first appearance in the ConsumerWatch chart. The latest in this successful franchise is set to hit retail in February.

Our supplementary question about the quality of PlayStation software as PS2 takes up development budgets shows that consumers perhaps have more faith in software makers than some sections of the specialist media. Less than half of those polled thought that PlayStation 1 games would suffer.

Stuart Dinsey

GamesDomain
Whats New
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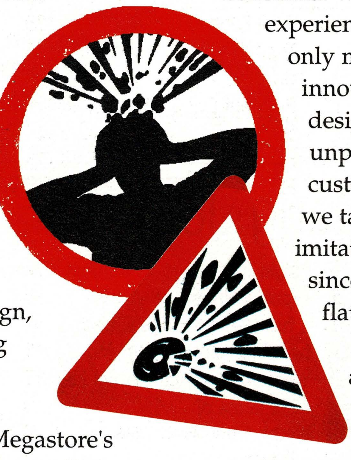
ConsumerWatch is published by MCV in association with Games Domain. For more information about Games Domain contact Nick DiCesare (sales@gamesdomain.com) or Richard Sutcliffe (rs@gamesdomain.com). Tel: 0121 326 0900

I guess we should feel flattered...



WHILE SHOPPING in my local precinct during the festive break, I had to do a double-take. I didn't know Virgin had a store in Milton Keynes, had we opened a store without telling anyone?

No, I was actually staring into the window of Electronics Boutique. EB's January sale POS is based around a red warning triangle design, with a price-smashing icon.

The reason for my double-take? Virgin Megastore's current brand campaign, called 'Dangerously Entertaining', is based around a red warning circle design with the price promotion execution featuring a similar icon.

Virgin have been using the warning circle designs both on in-store POS and above-the-line advertising since the beginning of November.

It's Virgin's aim to be at the forefront of providing the consumer with the ideal retail experience, through not only marketing but innovative store design and unparalleled customer service, so we take the view that imitation is the most sincere form of flattery.

So if there is anyone at EB who is still stuck for an idea for their next marketing campaign, please feel free to contact myself or one of my Virgin Megstores colleagues and we will gladly let you have our cast-offs.

Stephen Lynn
Marketing Manager - Games
Virgin Megastores

MCV Forward Planner

Even our rival has recently admitted that MCV is the undisputed market leader for all sectors of the interactive entertainment industry sector. But whilst it may clone our style, it cannot get close to our circulation (in excess of 9,100) or our editorial quality. For news of upcoming special features and promotions, read on...

Issue 70 Friday January 28th
The SuperMarket Software Explosion
We take a close look at the fast-growing supermarket retail sector, which has helped to broaden the High Street impact for everything from leading edge Dreamcast software to budget PC CD-ROM.

Issue 71 Friday February 4rd **Just Who Needs the Specialist Press?**
With games, children's software and educational products all having massively widened their audience base and improved their mainstream marketing in recent years, some believe that the importance of the monthly magazines has waned. MCV investigates how much power a review or preview might have in the eyes of retailers and consumers.

Issue 72 Friday February 11th **Milia 2000 Show Edition**
Showfloor Distribution **Total Circulation 13,000+**

As the industry prepares to jet off to Cannes for both the Milia exhibition and the Think.Tank conference, MCV provides an exhaustive and informed show edition. Some 4,000 copies of this edition will be distributed from both the showfloor and our booth (R13.26). To massively boost your trade marketing at this year's Milia event, contact Alex.Jarvis@mcvuk.com or call 01992 535647.

Issue 73 Friday February 18th **Milia 2000 Review**
Whilst most Milia visitors are still in their meetings or enjoying the beautiful Cannes surroundings, MCV's Milia News Team will be putting together a comprehensive editorial and pictorial report on Europe's premier interactive content exhibition and conference.

Advertising
☎ 01992 535647

Editorial
☎ 01992 535646

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The company behind MCV UK & International has opportunities for:

Senior Editorial

A full-time position is available to someone with superior journalistic skills and industry knowledge. They will work on our core product (its current circulation is 9,100 and rising), with a fast-track to promotion and duties ultimately extending to management of major new print and online editorial projects.

Layout/Production Assistant

Reporting to our Designer and Production Manager in order to free up time for new MCV Media print and online projects, this vacancy offers a fantastic full-time or part-time opportunity. Applicants should have a good grounding in Quark Express and Adobe Photoshop with knowledge of the print process, although training where necessary will also be provided for the right applicant.

If you want to be part of the company that has taken the trade publishing sector by storm since its foundation just 18 months ago, write in confidence to Stuart Dinsey, MCV Media UK Ltd, St.Andrew House, 46-48 St. Andrew Street, Hertford SG14 1JA. Or email Stuart.Dinsey@mcvuk.com. Tel: 01992 535688.

MCV MEDIA The New Force In Trade Publishing

MCV Media UK Limited is a subsidiary of the publicly-listed Computec Media AG

ED Games is a leading distributor for the interactive entertainment industry, supplying the best entertainment products to the best resellers. With a huge product range including accessories, consoles and software and exlcusive lines such as McLaren and Skream. We are currently looking for the following people:

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In order to fully service our expanding client base and promote our products to our international accounts, we are looking for a senior sales executive to take on this challenging role. This position will require some travel, a great deal of client contact and two years experience.
This position offers an excellent basic salary plus bonus scheme.

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These positions are to promote all the new ranges of products directly to the independent sector of the industry. If you have experience of independent retail and you are looking for a change, or you have sales experience and you want to move to an exciting company with an expanding product portfolio, then this could be the move for you! An excellent package is offered and the chance to take your career to the next level.

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Warfield, Berkshire. RG42 6BH

ED games

If you would like more information, please contact **Mr Igor Cipoletta** on **01344 885513**

Newswire

3DO orbits Third Planet

Lifestyle agency Third Planet has won the account for 3DO's Battle Tanx: Global Assault. The PR firm will oversee the non-specialist promotion for the title, including budget allocation, advertising design and merchandising. Third Planet will also handle the design work for 3DO's Midnight in Vegas, due in spring.

Future builds online

Future has bought four magazines and three websites from Dennis Publishing. The Bath-based publisher has acquired Hi-Fi Choice, Home Entertainment, Classic Rock and Metal Hammer, expanding its position in the music and technology markets. As part of the deal, Future will also take over the websites for three of the titles.

Toilet action for Replay

GTI is launching a washroom campaign for its Replay range of budget titles. Specialist agency Admedia is placing advertising in men's loos across 66 shopping centres and every motorway service station in the UK. According to Admedia, the average 'visitor' will spend 55 seconds looking at an ad. This figure includes shaking, of course.

Gameplay and BT team up

E-commerce giant Gameplay.com has signed up for BT's trials of its broadband ADSL service. Gameplay will provide an online store for the system, which launches later in the year.

Media Choice: PlayStation World

Publisher: Computec UK
Tel: 0181 901 7480
Price: £2.99
Pages: 260
Advertising: 9%

PSW
all-new PlayStation magazine
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EVERY GAME REVIEWED! OVER 50 PAGES OF TIPS! MASSIVE 260 PAGE ISSUE! ONLY £2.99!
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EXCLUSIVE
GRAN TURISMO 2
First UK Review
REVIEWED: RESIDENT EVIL 3 · TOY STORY 2 · ISS PRO EVOLUTION · TRACK AND FIELD 2

Give-aways: PlayStation memory card worth £4.99. 16-page supplement of forthcoming 3DO titles

Features: In-depth report on Sony's Aibo electronic dog, gadget round-up, investigation into retail's knowledge of PlayStation 2, pro-celebrity gaming, Lara 'Croft' Weller photo spread, the complete guide to PlayStation 2, common gaming cliches revealed

Previews: Colin McRae Rally 2, Marvel Vs Capcom, Dukes of Hazard, Roll Cage: Stage 2, Fear Effect, Beatmania, Die Hard Trilogy 2, Ehrgeiz

Reviews (out of 10): Gran Turismo 2 (10), Space Debris (5), Jet Rider 3 (2), Resident Evil 3 (9), Shadow Madness (5), Grandia (9)

Average Score: 6.7

Rate Card: Full Page £3,200, DPS £6,000
Editors: Rich Leadbetter/David Upchurch
Ad Director: Nigel Taylor

Sitewatch

SOUL CALIBUR

Game Online www.game.uk.com

EB's Game stores move online as the group prepares to take on the likes of URWired and Gameplay.com. The Game site is tidy and well laid out, with pack shots available for all leading titles and ordering kept simple. Full ranges for all the leading formats and extensive back catalogue titles are on offer and the overall impression is of a neat and effective move into the online arena.

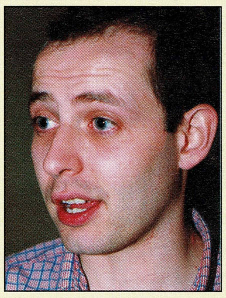
Rating 5/5

Up Close & Personal: Doug Johns, Director, 1-Up Media

What was your first job in the industry?
Working in an independent computer shop called Microland near Portsmouth back in 1985. Then Nick Clarkson whisked me off to the wonderful world of journalism with Gollner Publishing and made Steve Merrett my boss. I'll never forgive him.

Most important lesson learned?
Although journalists are happy to criticise the bugs in games, they don't like criticisms about cock-ups in their reviews.

You then went to Virgin as PR. Why?
I couldn't write for toffee and who could turn down working with Woody?

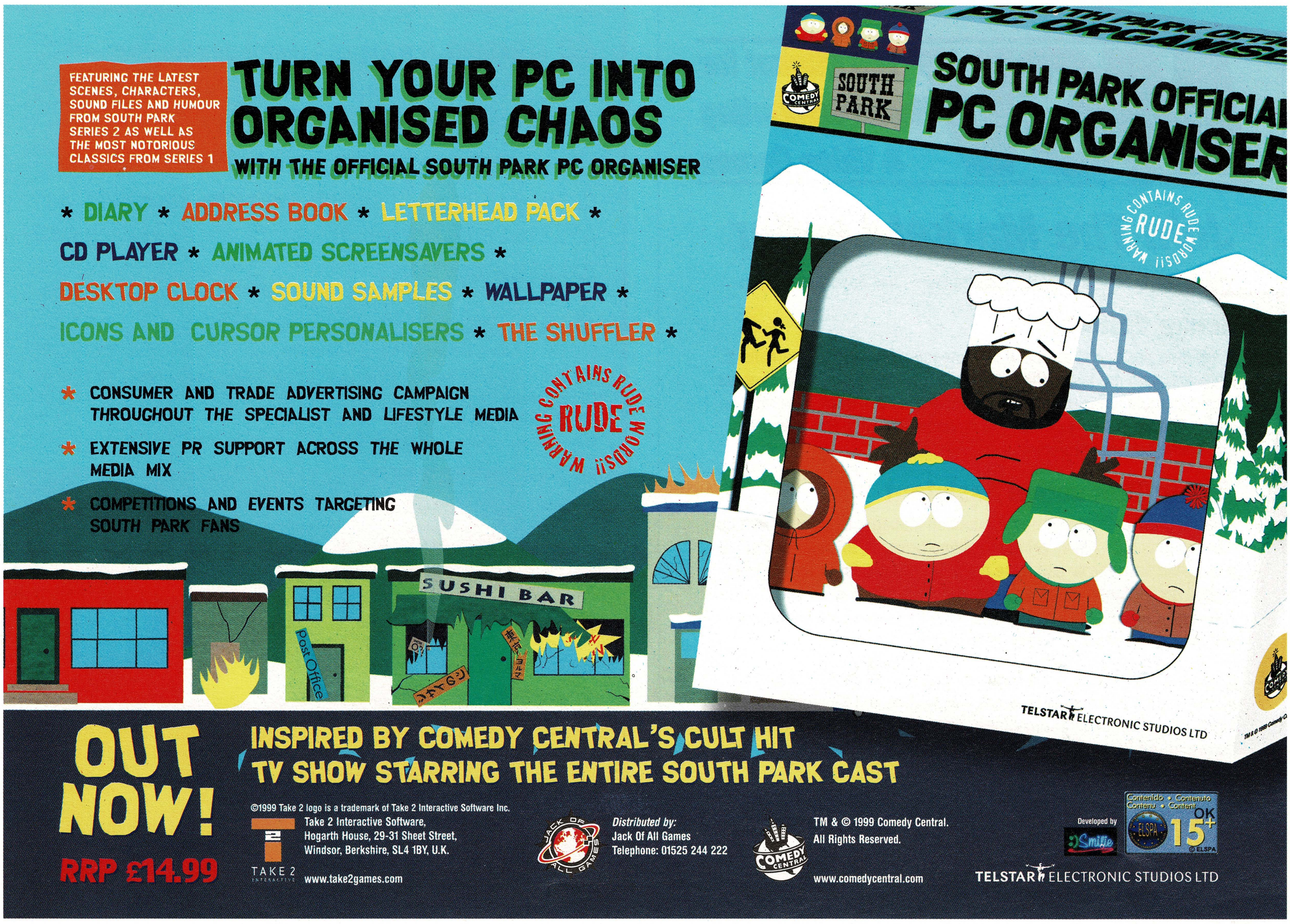


Virgin had a reputation as a fun place to be. Was it?
Yeah, they were some of the best times of my career. The team when I was there were a great bunch and we even managed to cram in the odd bit of work in between all that drinking. That bloke Graeme Struthers was a something of a whining old git, though, it has to be said...

Funniest memories of the industry?
Although it wasn't funny at the time, getting caught by Jason Dutton's Mum having a slash in her airing cupboard. I'm afraid I was very, very drunk.

Why the decision to form 1-Up Media?
I just looked at the other agencies out there and couldn't find one offering a pan-European service. Combine that with a new challenge and working with Chris Knight and that sealed it.

Tell us a secret about Chris Knight?
It's a very little-known fact that he is, in fact, a lady-boy.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www.take2games.com

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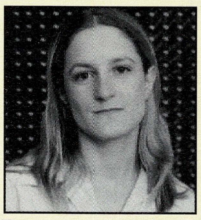
THQ hires Bincliffe, Spunk emerges

... plus HotGen expands, Struthers Craves new role, Jeffery appointed LucasArts boss, Darragh joins CMCS and Todd quits Lego



THQ has bolstered its marketing department with the appointment of **SARAH BINCLIFFE** as marketing manager UK/export. She joins from Ubi Soft. Bincliffe will be working closely with **REBECCA LESTER** on the Rugrats launch in April and will take over full UK marketing responsibilities for Rugrats, Power Rangers, Scooby Doo, Felony Pursuit and Cultures amongst others.

Future Publishing's PC Format has made a number of staff changes. Joining as editor is **DAN HUTCHINSON**, who has previously held positions as deputy editor on the magazine and editor of PC Answers. Supporting Hutchinson will be new associate editor **CHRIS JAMES** who joins from Planet PC. Overseeing the magazine will be publisher **JAMES BINNS**.

HotGen Studios continues to expand with announcement of two further signings. **ANTHONY ROSBOTTOM** joins as senior graphic artist, while **MARK FISHER** becomes the firm's director of development.

LucasArts has a new president, with **SIMON JEFFERY** taking up the role following the departure of **JACK SORENSON**. At the same time, **MARY BIHR** has been appointed as vice president of worldwide sales and marketing.

Ubi Soft has restructed its UK office. **GILES JONES** has been promoted to the newly created role of sales director, while **TRUDY FRIDAY** joins as national account manager. Also, **TINA HICKS** becomes senior product manager and **LOUSE GABRIEL** becomes UK PR manager.

Industry veteran **STEVE DARRAGH** has quit duplication outfit MPO to join rival CMCS as sales and marketing director.

Erstwhile marketing manager at Take 2 **GAVIN WHITE** has established a new marketing agency, wittily-named Spunk.

Jack of All Games' COO **GERRY TUCKER** has taken over day-to-day operations, following the departure of managing director **TERRY MALHAM**.

JON TODD has quit his position as European PR manager for Lego Media to take up the position of director of technology marketing at London agency Keen Integrated Marketing and Public Relations.

Sega Germany has hired **KLAUS SCHULZE FRONING** as marketing director, while **MARKUS MALTI** joins as PR assistant.

GRAEME STRUTHERS has joined Crave's UK office, as predicted by MCV. Previously European marketing director for the EA-owned Westwood Studios, Struthers will take a senior management role, reporting directly to European boss **CHRISTIAN GLOE**.

GLEN O'CONNELL has joined Rage Software as head of communications. He previously held the same role at Psygnosis.

If you would like your company's appointments featured within our Industry Appointments page, simply email your details to **Lisa.Foster@mcvuk.com**. Alternatively, fax us on **01992 535648** or telephone the MCV Newsdesk directly with your information on **01992 535646**. Photos are particularly welcome.

UK PR Manager
Location: London - £: Neg

This emerging publisher is looking for a dedicated gamer with at least 3 years experience in the PR field.

Reporting to the Marketing Manager you will be responsible for the planning & execution of PR campaigns across both specialist & lifestyle arenas. A knowledge & experience of all major formats will be essential as will existing relationships with key journalists and magazines.

Close liaison with various departments & international offices is required, so a self starter with initiative welcomed.

Acquisitions Manager
Location: London - £: Neg

Do you know what makes an outstanding game? If so, we are interested in talking to you.

We're looking for an individual that can initiate & maintain relationships with both emerging & existing developers, with a mind to sourcing the best new product available on all formats.

The ideal candidate would be highly motivated, know quality software inside out and be able to proactively liaise with international studio heads and senior management confidently.

Software Manager
Location: London - £: Neg

The right candidate will act as a shadow producer across all major formats. You will be expected to have a keen understanding of the development process, be able to track product accurately and report to the necessary departments. Close liaison with US internal studios, external developers and various company departments, principally our European localisation team, will be paramount. You'll also be the first point of contact when dealing with European code submissions to first party publishers.

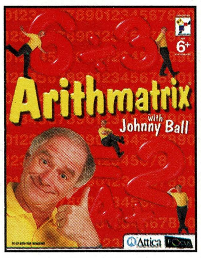
Please address C.Vs to Recruitment, Crave Entertainment, Studio 58, Canalot Studios, 222 Kensal Road, London, W10 5BN

CRAVE ENTERTAINMENT

Inspector Morse helps to teach English, Johnny Ball encourages mathematical thinking, the Looney Tunes get into design software and typing is made a lot easier thanks to Nikasoft. They're featured all in **MCV**'s unrivalled home software coverage...

Arithmatrix

Available: **April**
Supplier: **Focus Multimedia**
Tel: **01889 570156**
Price: **£19.99**



JOHNNY BALL is probably the grandfather of 'edutainment' and he has applied his successful fun teaching methods to Focus Multimedia's Arithmatrix.

The package is aimed at children aged six upwards, and encourages numerical thinking using maths-based puzzles.

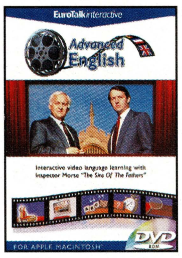
Numbers and mathematical symbols are randomly selected to be placed within a grid and completing basic sums. Points are awarded depending on length and positioning.

Johnny Ball supplies words of advice and encouragement when the young mathematician can't think of a number.

Nice one!

Advanced English

Available: **March 1st**
Supplier: **EuroTalk**
Tel: **0171 371 7711**
Price: **£34.99**



EUROTALK enters the DVD-ROM market with Advanced English, a sophisticated language-learning package.

Incorporating a complete episode of Inspector Morse with a number of ingenious interactive lessons, the title makes full use of DVD capabilities.

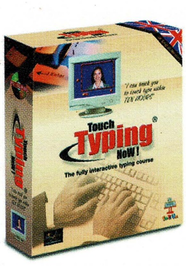
The episode can be viewed in full and a scene selecter enables instant access to any part of the featured TV episode

An interesting feature is the ability to dub-over the actors voices with that of the student to practice speech and accent.

Eurotalk has added plenty of fresh ideas to help make this a smart new product.

Touch Typing Now

Available: **Out Now**
Supplier: **NikaSoft**
Tel: **0181 607 7703**
Price: **£24.99**



TOUCH TYPING NOW is a 19-part training program that, as the title hints at, improves a user's touch typing skills.

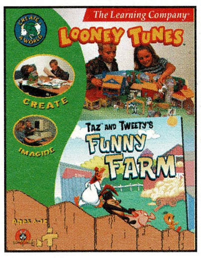
The title incorporates a virtual keyboard and hands that mimic the actions of the student, while an interactive teacher often stops the lesson to offer advice and corrections.

As the student progresses, mini-games open up including a Tetris-style game that uses letters and Space Invaders that has been adapted to improve typing skills.

Curiously, a hot link is included for access to NikaSoft's typing chat room where students of the program can have a good gossip about touch typing.

Taz and Tweety's Funny Farm

Available: **Out Now**
Supplier: **Mattel Interactive**
Tel: **01293 651300**
Price: **£19.99**



TAZ AND TWEETY'S Funny Farm is one of two new titles under Mattel Interactive's Create A World moniker.

This design and print package allows the user to recreate scenes from the Warner Bros. cartoons and print them out for construction.

All the well-known Looney Tune characters are featured, along with numerous 2D farmyard-themed designs that can be turned into 3D playsets with a bit of glue and patience.

It also supports Levels 1 and 2 in the design based national curriculum category, but kids will probably be having too much fun to notice.

Release planner

An at-a-glance guide to new education, reference, lifestyle and utility PC titles on their way to retail...

BBC Multimedia

☎ 0181 222 1571

Teletubbies (PlayStation)	February 3rd
Noddy (GBC)	February 17th

BTL Publishing

☎ 01274 841373

AA A to B 2000 Journey Planner	January
Easy Tutor Learn Internet Now	January
Easy Tutor Learn Lotus Smartsuite	January

Computer Bookshops

☎ 0121 778 3333

Encyclopedia for Smart Kids 1	February
Encyclopedia for Smart Kids 2	February
Rome: Crime, Passion and Power	March

Data Becker

☎01420 22707

Copy Station	January
Music Centre Pro	February
Monster Pack Sound Library	March

Disney Interactive

☎ 0171 734 1133

Winnie the Pooh Toddler	February
Winnie the Pooh Pre-School	February
Winnie the Pooh Kindergarten	February
Toy Story 2 Print Studio	February
Toy Story 2 Activity Centre	February

Dorling Kindersley

☎ 0171 836 5411

The Wiggles	February
Test for Success Age 11	March
Three Little Pigs	March

Europress

☎ 01625 855000

Number Crew 1	January 28th
Number Crew 2	January 28th
Maths Key Stage 2	February 4th
A-Level Revision Maths	February 4th

EuroTalk

☎ 0171 371 7711

Talk Now: Gujurati	January
Talk Now: Hindi	January
Talk Now: Kannada	January
Talk Now: Malayam	January
Talk Now: Punjabi	January
Talk Now: Sini	January

Focus Multimedia

☎01889 570156

Kids Mensa	January
Fuzzy and Floppy	January
V-Mail	January
Route Finder France	January
Astrology for Lovers	February

Mattel Interactive

☎ 01293 651300

Nick-O-Matic Brain Bender	January
PrintShop 10	January
Once Upon A Time - Life	January
ClueFinders 5 & 6	February
ClueFinders 6 & 7	February
Orly's Draw A Story	February
Oxford University GCSE Guide	February
Elmo's Number Journey	March
Elmo's Letter Adventure	March
Image Factory 200k & 500k	March
ClickArt 40k & 65k	March
Real Homes 3D Designer	March
3D Home Design Suite	March
3D Home Architect	March
Total 3D Landscape	March

Sherston Software

☎ 01666 843200

Oxford Literacy Web - Sound Activities	February 1st
Oxford Literacy Web - The Big ABC	February 1st
Oxford Reading Tree Stage 5	February 20th

Tivola

☎ 0208 255 2442

Max on the Moon	February
Oscar Drops into the Countryside	February

To ensure your company's inclusion in this invaluable retail guide to software products arriving outside the mainstream games area, send information and materials directly to **Matt Camp, MCV Media UK, St. Andrew House, 46-48 St. Andrew Street, Hertford, Herts SG14 1JA.** Tel: **01992 535646** Or email details to **Matt.Camp@mcvuk.com.**

CHILDREN'S TOP 25

1. Sabrina Brat Attack	Havas
2. Action Man: Island X	Hasbro
3. Barbie Sleeping Beauty	Mattel
4. Thomas the Tank Engine	Hasbro
5. Lego Loco	Lego Media
6. Sabrina the Teenage Witch	Havas
7. Barbie As Rapunzel	TLC
8. Lego Rock Raiders	Lego Media
9. Barbie Print 'n' Play	TLC
10. The Simpsons Cartoon Studio	Fox
11. Lego Creator	Lego Media
12. Barbie: Riding Club	Mattel
13. Tonka Workshop	Hasbro
14. TOTP Mix Factory 2	BBC
15. Magic Artist Studio	Disney
16. Tarzan Activity Centre	Disney
17. Rugrats Mystery Adventures	TLC
18. Pocket & Tails Go Exploring	TLC
19. Pocket & Tails Go to Town	TLC
20. Generation Girl	Mattel
21. Barbie Photo Designer	Mattel
22. The Cat in the Hat	TLC
23. Furby: Adventures	Hasbro
24. Tonka Construction Kit	Hasbro
25. Barbie Screen Styler	TLC

Source ELSPA/ChartTrack, December sales

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GEM

Resident hardware expert **George Kotsiofides** this week takes a look at new and upcoming products from Fire International, MadCatz and Wild Things. It's all part of our continued unrivalled support of this lucrative sector of the market...

Arcade Twin Shock Joystick

Available: **Out now**
Supplier: **Fire International**
Telephone: **01302 325225**
Price: **£39.99**

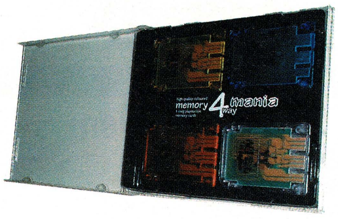
FAIR ENOUGH, we saw a similar beast from ED Games last year, but we really like Fire's entry into double arcade stick territory.

For starters, the unit features a twin rumble effect similar to that found on Dual Shock controllers. Two sets of arcade-style sticks and a total of 16 action buttons really set this apart from traditional controllers. The sturdy set-up is also perfect for arcade beat 'em ups, such as the Street Fighter series. Slow Motion and Turbo Fire functions are also included.

The product is backed by consumer and trade ads as well as mail outs to indie retailers.

4 in 1 Memory Mania

Available: **This month**
Supplier: **Wild Things**
Telephone: **01222 755774**
Price: **£17.99**



WILD THINGS has devised an attractive way to present its 1MB PlayStation memory card range.

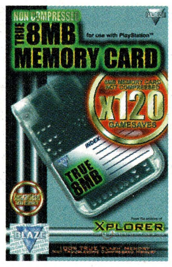
The company has discovered that four cards will fit snugly in a CD jewel case. This allows users to keep their cards together tidily and will also allow them to store the case in a CD rack alongside their PlayStation games.

The memory cards come in four flavours: raspberry red, blueberry blue, lemon yellow and ice clear.

A simple but effective means of presentation.

8MB Memory card

Available: **Out now**
Supplier: **Fire International**
Telephone: **01302 325225**
Price: **£19.99**



YOU MIGHT THINK that PlayStation memory cards are much of a muchness. And for the most part you'd be right.

To counter this, the Blaze 8MB card offers some interesting features that help it stand out.

The card boasts 120 save slots of uncompressed memory that, unlike compressed versions, will not lose those all important save games. Additionally, by sending the card back to Blaze, the total memory can be upgraded to 16MB for even more storage space.

If you would like your hardware products featured on this page, contact **George Kotsiofides** on 01992 535646. Please note that we require a visual and full marketing information.

MC2 Wheel

Available: **March**
Supplier: **Madcatz (via Planet)**
Telephone: **01992 707400**
Price: **£59.99**

THE MC2 WHEEL features powerful propriety calibration software called Accudrive that is built into the unit itself. This allows users to adjust the sensitivity of the wheel's response to suit the individual user.

Additionally, the double injected wheel itself is coated in a rubber grip that gives players a firm hold, even when under extreme vibration from the force feedback motors.

A total of 10 buttons are arranged around the unit and a gear shift lever is also featured.

A good solid set of pedals completes the unit.

Guillemot

SHOCK² RACING WHEEL
WHEEL HORSEPOWER!!

Feel the ***passion. Drive to win.*** The yellow and black badge on this stunningly handsome racewheel tells you true. No other wheel has horsepower like this. The ***most powerful*** vibration motor. The ***most authentic*** F1 controls. The ***most astounding*** effects. Style and class no other wheel can live with.

Feel ***necksnapping*** g-force. Giant hand braking. ***Vision blurring*** acceleration. ***Teeth rattling*** curb jolts. ***Shattering*** collisions. Feel your hands on ***the wheel of destiny.*** The red banners are waving for you. The blue flags are out for every other racewheel.

THE NEW SHOCK² RACING WHEEL THAT LEADS FROM POLE TO FLAG.
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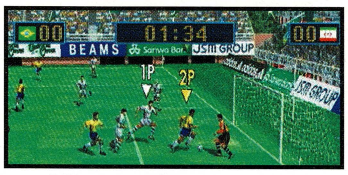
ORDER TIPS

Some hot titles are due, most of them sequels, with heavyweight marketing campaigns to boot. Look out for Gran Turismo 2, Eidos' Resident Evil 3 and Activision's Toy Story 2 for PlayStation, Virtua Striker 2 for Dreamcast and Final Fantasy VIII on PC...



Virtua Striker 2 Ver. 2000.1

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dreamcast

Genre: Sports
Developer: Sega
Publisher: Sega
Street date: January 28
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION 2 players

Stunning animation brings the beautiful game to life on Dreamcast. The arcade based action is fast and furious with intuitive controls and end to end action. The ability to save players' favourite goals to VMU is a welcome bonus.

👁 3+ FP

MARKETING SUPPORT

TV	30-second TV commercial aired in two phases (January 20th-22nd and 27th-29th)
Print	Ads in specialist, trade and national press
Misc.	National radio campaign, Internet
P.O.S.	A2/A4 posters, standees, cubes

SALES POTENTIAL

The best football game on the Dreamcast. Display it on a demo pod and you will ensure strong sales.

GRAN TURISMO 2
4
160 km/h

Gran Turismo 2

GENERAL INFORMATION

PlayStation

Genre: Racing
Developer: Polyphony
Publisher: SCEE
Street date: January 28
Estimated street price: £34.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION 2 players

The highly anticipated sequel to one of the biggest selling PlayStation games ever was never going to disappoint. Improved graphics, physics and opponent AI coupled with over 400 real cars add up to an attractive package.

👁 3+ FP

MARKETING SUPPORT

TV	£1m campaign including TV ads running for 2 weeks
Print	Lifestyle and motoring press ads
Misc.	NUS promotions, sponsorship of Autosport Show stage area
P.O.S.	Full range of pre-release and release POS

SALES POTENTIAL

The first real blockbuster of the year. A guaranteed hit, set to drive sales through the roof.

Resident Evil 3: Nemesis

GENERAL INFORMATION

PlayStation

Genre: Action/Horror
Developer: Capcom
Publisher: Eidos
Street date: February 18th
Estimated street price: £24.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION 1 player

Eidos also has Code Veronica due on Dreamcast this year. Features lush visuals, more zombies and the return of Jill Valentine. Also introduces the terrifying Nemesis creature that stalks the player throughout the game. Scary.

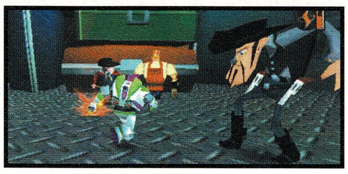
👁 18+ FP

MARKETING SUPPORT

TV	£1.8m pan-European TV ad campaign
Print	Specialist, trade and lifestyle press ads
Misc.	Outdoor poster campaign, nationwide washroom ads, targeted radio campaign

SALES POTENTIAL

A massive marketing campaign coupled with the reputation of the series will see another massive hit for Eidos and retail.



Toy Story 2

GENERAL INFORMATION

PlayStation

Genre: Action
Developer: Disney
Publisher: Activision
Street date: February 4th
Estimated street price: £34.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION 1 player

The film will be huge and Activision are surely onto a winner here. Players control Buzz Lightyear in a 3D adventure based around various parts of the film. Power-ups take the form of other toys that help out. Nice.

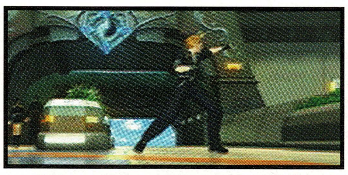
👁 3+ L FP

MARKETING SUPPORT

Cinema	Six week national campaign shown with the film itself
Print	Three-month specialist press campaign with youth and teen press ads expected
P.O.S.	FSDU for all formats, jumbo boxes, demos, A2 posters

SALES POTENTIAL

With the film out the same day as the game, consumer awareness will be massive for Toy Story 2, as will sales.



Final Fantasy VIII

GENERAL INFORMATION

PC

Genre: RPG
Developer: Squaresoft
Publisher: Eidos
Street date: February 18
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION 2 players

The PlayStation version proved that consumers love a good RPG. And this is certainly one of the best. The PC version boasts improved graphics and 3D sound, of course, but underneath the game remains the same. Excellent.

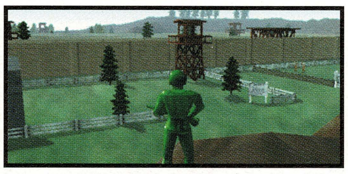
👁 15+ FP

MARKETING SUPPORT

Print	Consumer and lifestyle press ads
Misc.	PR campaign covering lifestyle and national press, interactive web site featuring virtual Valentine's cards
P.O.S.	Trade POS including posters and oversized boxes

SALES POTENTIAL

Perfect for the PC audience. A great game that should sell buckets.



Army Men: Sarge's Heroes

GENERAL INFORMATION

N64

Genre: Action
Developer: 3DO
Publisher: 3DO Europe
Street date: January 28
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION 4 players

Sarge's Heroes is just one of five Army Men titles released on the same day across multiple formats. The Green and Tan plastic armies battle across objective-led missions. Excellent range of weapons available.

👁 3+ FP

MARKETING SUPPORT

Cinema	Cinema campaign in conjunction with Toy Story 2
Print	Specialist and trade press ads
Misc.	Heavyweight specialist and non-specialist pan-European PR
P.O.S.	FSDU unit and assorted POS

SALES POTENTIAL

A huge marketing campaign and strong branding should ensure a successful landing at retail for Sarge's Heroes. Top.

MCV Hotlist

Get your pre-orders confirmed for these hot titles…

DREAMCAST					
Sega Bass Fishing	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	**January**
Virtua Striker 2	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	**January 21st**
Resident Evil 2	Action	Virgin	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	**January 28th**
Re-Volt	Racing	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	**February 4th**
Crazy Taxi	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	**February 25th**
PLAYSTATION					
Ace Combat 3	Action	SCEE	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	**January 21st**
Gran Turismo 2	Racing	SCEE	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	**January 28th**
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis	Action	Eidos	0181 636 3000	Centresoft	**February 18th**
ISS Evolution	Sports	Konami	01895 470500	Open	**February 25th**
NINTENDO 64					
Toy Story 2	Action	Activision	01895 456700	THE Games	**February 4th**
Castlevania 2	Action	Konami	01895 470500	Open	**February 2000**
Pokemon Stadium	RPG	Nintendo	01703 653377	THE Games	**March 31st**
Perfect Dark	Action	Nintendo	01703 653377	THE Games	**April 2000**
PC					
Delta Force 2	Action	Novalogic	01908 575600	Open	**February 4th**
Battlezone II	Action	Activision	01895 456 700	Centresoft	**January 28th**
Le Mans 24 Hour	Racing	Infogrames	0161 827 8000	Centresoft	**February 18th**
Messiah	Action	Virgin	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	**March**
GAME BOY					
Toy Story 2	Action	Activision	01895 456700	Open	**February 4th**
Wario Land 3	Action	Nintendo	01703 653377	THE Games	**February**
Resident Evil	Action	Virgin	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	**February**

Key to our weekly product guide

👁	Indicates that MCV considers the product particularly suitable for in-store display.
18+	MCV's predicted voluntary or BBFC rating.
L	Indicates that the game has a licence attached to it. The arrow points upwards if the licence adds value at retail, down if not.
FP	FP indicates a full-price release, BC is a back-catalogue title. ED indicates expansion disc.

PLANET DISTRIBUTION

01992 707 400 The largest distributor of multi-format leisure products in the UK 01992 707 400

'Thrasher is EXACTLY what a skating game should be'...'An EXCELLENT game'
OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE - 8/10

'Its going to be the Gran Turismo of the boarding World and its heading this...'
PLAYSTATION PRO - October 1999

Arcade PlayStation Game of the Month
'Beyond its looks and heavenly control system, the key to Thrasher is that it's so damn realistic'
- December 1999

ZOO YORK
INDEPENDENT
SANTA CRUZ
CIRCUIT
Supreme
FTC SKATE SHOP
STEREO
REAL
Freedumb
ALIEN WORKSHOP
Forties
DC SHOECOUSA
THINK

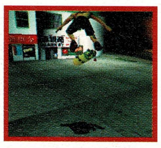
RECLAIM THE STREETS

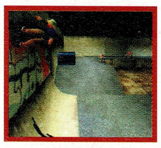
features

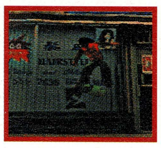
- Over 100 real skateboarding tricks to learn
- 12 genuine skating Mecca's including LA, San Francisco and London
- A choice of 6 skaters, each with distinct looks and skating styles
- 7 Multi-player options
- Authentic sponsors with individual deck graphics, shoes and shirts all eager to sign up the latest talent
- 'Sick fix' mode enabling demented players to throw themselves off ramps and railings for maximum damage
- 'Street' mode option with cops waiting to bust you at every opportunity

marketing

- Highly visable advertising campaign in specialist, lifestyle and trade press
- Extensive PR support through-out media mix
- Strong trade marketing support
- Grass Roots internet campaign
- National nightclub tour
- Dedicated Website
- Promotional skate teams
- Competitions and events targeting skateboarders and gamers alike



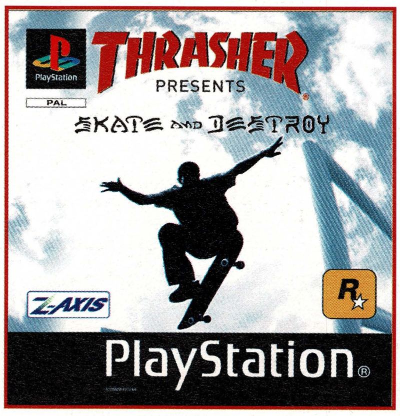




further info

- www.skateanddestroy.com
- www.rockstargames.com
- www.take2games.com
- Jack Of All Games Tel: 01525 244 222

THE
hardcore
skate
sim



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KOCH DISTRIBUTION

Sony blockbuster speeds in

Gran Turismo 2 finally arrives on the High Street, ushering in the first triple-A release of the year. Meanwhile 3DO's **Army Men** lands first on PlayStation and PC formats…

	TITLE	FORMAT	GENRE	PUBLISHER	TELEPHONE	DISTRIBUTOR	RELEASE DATE	DEVELOPER
FROM NEXT FRIDAY	Alien Nations	PC	Strategy	Infogrames	0161 827 8000	Centresoft	January 28th	Infogrames
	Army Men 3D	PSX	Action	3DO Europe	0171 761 9300	Centresoft	January 28th	3DO
	Army Men in Space	PC	Action	3DO Europe	0171 761 9300	Centresoft	January 28th	3DO
	Battlezone 2	PC	Strategy	Activision	01895 456700	Centresoft	January 28th	Pandemic
	Big Bang	PC	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 28th	Acclaim Studios
	Cricket 2000	PSX	Sports	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	January 28th	EA Sports
	Eagle One: Harrier Attack	PSX	Action	Infogrames	0161 827 8000	Centresoft	January 28th	Accolade
	Football World Manager 2k	PC	Strategy	Ubi Soft	0181 944 9000	Pinnacle	January 28th	Ubi Soft
	Gran Turismo 2	PSX	Racing	Sony	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	January 28th	Polyphony
	Grudge Warriors	PSX	Action	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 28th	Tempest
	Imperium Gallactica 2	PC	Strategy	GT Interactive	020 8222 9700	Open	January 28th	Digital Reality
	Railroad Tycoon 2	PSX	Strategy	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 28th	Gearhead&Tremor
	Renegade Racers	PC	Racing	Interplay	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 28th	Virgin
	Space Debris	PSX	Action	Sony	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	January 28th	Rage
	Team Alligator	PC	Flight Sim	GT Interactive	020 8222 9700	Open	January 28th	Simi/Kuju
	Tee-Off	DC	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 28th	Acclaim Studios
	Total Soccer	GBC	Sports	Ubi Soft	0181 944 9000	Pinnacle	January 28th	Iridon
FROM 4TH FEBRUARY	12 O'Clock High	PC	Strategy	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	February 4th	Talonsoft
	Cricket 2000	PSX	Sports	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	February 4th	EA Sports
	Delta Force 2	PC	Action	NovaLogic	0171 405 1777	Pinnacle	February 4th	NovaLogic
	Football Manager	GBC	Strategy	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	February 4th	Acclaim Studios
	Grandia	PSX	RPG	Ubi Soft	0181 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 4th	Ubi Soft
	Missile Command	PSX	Action	Hasbro	0181 569 1234	Centresoft	February 4th	Atari
	Resident Evil 2	N64	Action	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	February 4th	Capcom
	South Park Rally	PC/PSX	Racing	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	February 5th	Acclaim Studios
	Tiger Woods PGA 2000	PSX	Sports	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	February 4th	EA Sports
	Tiger Woods PGA Tour	GBC	Sports	THQ	01483 767656	Open	February 4th	THQ
	Tink Tank	PSX	Action	Sony	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	February 4th	MGM
	Toy Story 2	PSX/N64	Action	Activision	01895 456700	Centresoft	February 4th	Disney/Pixar
	NBA 2000	DC	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	February 10th	Visual Concepts
	Army Men: Air Attack	PSX	Action	3DO Europe	0171 761 9300	Centresoft	February 11th	3DO
	Dune 2000	PSX	Strategy	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	February 11th	Westwood
	Ergheiz	PSX	Fighting	Sony	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	February 11th	Square
	Int. Track and Field 2	PSX	Sports	Konami	01895 470500	Open	February 11th	Konami
	Marvel Vs Capcom	PSX	Fighting	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	February 11th	Capcom
	Nerf Arena Blast	PC	Action	Hasbro	0181 569 1234	Centresoft	February 11th	Hasbro
	Superbike 2000	PSX	Racing	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	February 11th	EA Sports
	Supercross 2000	N64	Racing	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	February 11th	EA Sports
	The Sims	PC	Strategy	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	February 11th	Maxis

A to Z

12 O'Clock High	February 4th
Alien Nations	January 28th
Army Men 3D	January 28th
Army Men in Space	January 28th
Army Men: Air Attack	February 11th
Battlezone 2	January 28th
Big Bang	January 28th
Cricket 2000	February 4th
Cricket 2000	January 28th
Cyber Tiger	February 18th
Deadly Skies	February 18th
Delta Force 2	February 4th
Dune 2000	February 11th
Eagle One: HArrier Attack	January 28th
Ergheiz	February 11th
Evolution	February 25th
Football Manager	February 4th
Football World Manager 2k	January 28th
Gran Turismo 2	January 28th
Grandia	February 4th
Grudge Warriors	January 28th
Imperium Gallactica 2	January 28th
Int. Track and Field	February 18th
Int. Track and Field 2	February 11th
ISS Pro: Evolution	February 25th
Marvel Vs. Capcom	February 11th
Missile Command	February 4th
NBA 2000	February 10th
Nerf Arena Blast	February11th
Railroad Tycoon 2	January 28th
Renegade Racers	January 28th
Resident Evil 2	February 4th
South Park Rally	February 5th
Space Debris	January 28th
Superbike 2000	February 11th
Supercross 2000	February 11th
Team Alligator	January 28th
Tee-Off	January 28th
The Sims	February 11th
Tiger Woods PGA 2000	February 4th
Tiger Woods PGA Tour	February 4th
Tink Tank	February 4th
Total Soccer	January 28th
Toy Story 2	February 4th

Lap 1/1 1st
Total Time 1:31.768
Lap Time 1:31.768
2
88 km/h
GRAN TURISMO 2

Gran Turismo 2 drives into retail next week

Sony Release Guide

Title	Format	Date
GT 2	PSX	January 28th
Space Debris	PSX	January 28th
Shadow Madness	PSX	February
Cool Boarders 4	PSX	February
Tink Tank	PSX	February 4th
Ergheiz	PSX	February 11th

3DO Release Guide

Title	Format	Date
Army Men 3D	PSX	January 28th
Army Men in Space	PC	January 28th
Army Men: Air Attack	PSX	February 11th
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	N64	March 10th
Battletanx: Global Assault	N64	March 17th
Army Men	GBC	March 24th
Army Men: Air Tactics	PC	March 24th

ARMY MEN: High quality debut from 3DO Europe

Pre-Sell

Lap 1/1 2nd
Total Time 1:19.416
Lap Time 1:19.416
4
127 km/h
GRAN TURISMO 2

Gran Turismo 2

Released: **January 28th**
Format: **PlayStation**
Genre: **Racing**
Publisher: **Sony**
Tel: **0171 533 1400**

PlayStation World

"Gran Turismo 2 is quite simply the greatest road racing game money can buy. Virtually perfect in every regard, this game is a revelation."

10/10

Official PlayStation Magazine

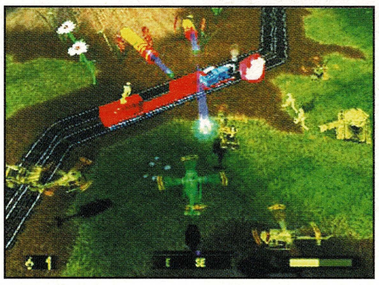
"Somehow, some way, Polyphony have managed to improve on PlayStation perfection. Gran Turismo 2 is an incredible game."

10/10

Daily Radar

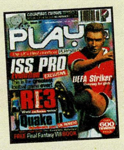
"Anyone who's playing another racer right now should put it down, get Gran Turismo 2 and get started. It'll take a long time to open all this game's secrets."

4/4



Army Men: Air Attack

Released: **February 11th**
Format: **PlayStation**
Genre: **Action**
Publisher: **3DO**
Tel: **0171 761 9300**



Play

"Expect good things from this game, with Toy Story 2 about to cause another cinematic frenzy, its timing couldn't have been better."

PREVIEW

PlayStation Power

"Think Jungle Strike crossed with Micro Machines and you're on the right lines. And since Air Attack is playing and looking pretty fine, so are 3DO."

PREVIEW

Arcade

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8/10

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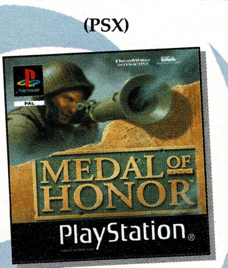

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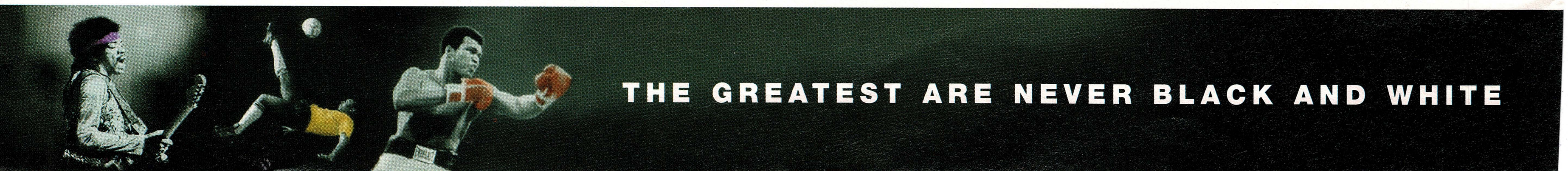
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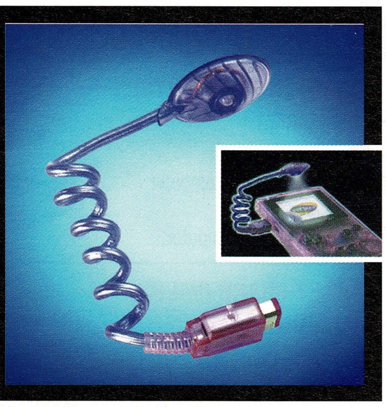
ACCESSORIES



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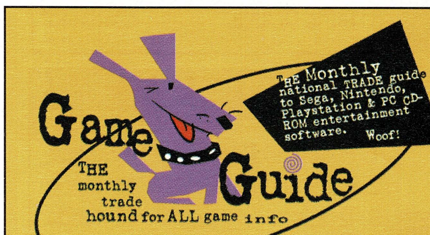
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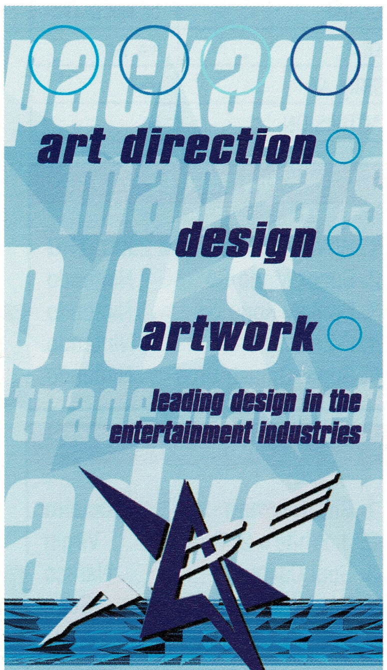

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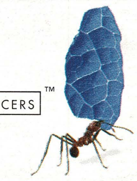


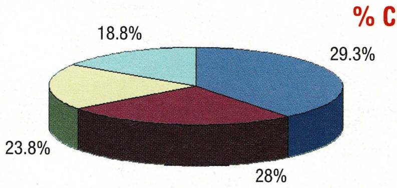
UK CONSUMER SOFTWARE CHARTS

DREAMCAST PLAYSTATION PC N64 GAME BOY

Every week **MCV** brings you an at-a-glance guide to the UK market's top-selling software titles
All data supplied by ChartTrack and ELSPA

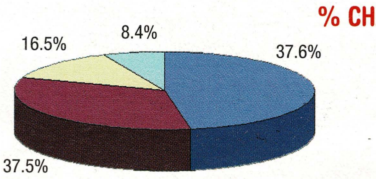
Market Breakdown (Week ending Jan 15th)

MARKET SHARE (UNITS)



	% CHANGE
TOTAL MARKET	**-33**
🟦 Full Price Console	-38
🟥 Full Price Home Computer	-27
🟨 Budget Console	-36
🟦 Budget Home Computer	-27

MARKET SHARE (VALUE)



	% CHANGE
TOTAL MARKET	**-32**
🟦 Full Price Console	-38
🟥 Full Price Home Computer	-25
🟨 Budget Console	-36
🟦 Budget Home Computer	-26

SINGLE FORMAT BEST-SELLERS

Format	Title	Label	Publisher
PLAYSTATION	FIFA 2000	EA SPORTS	EA
NINTENDO 64	WWF WRESTLMANIA 2000	THQ	THQ
PC CD-ROM	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 99/00	EIDOS	EIDOS
GAME BOY COLOUR	SUPER MARIO BROS	NINTENDO	NINTENDO
DREAMCAST	SHADOWMAN	ACCLAIM	ACCLAIM

Dreamcast
SHADOW MAN
15
Acclaim

ALL FORMATS TOP 40

This Week	Last Week	Title	Label	Format
1	1	FIFA 2000	EA SPORTS	PSX, PC
2	2	TOMORROW NEVER DIES	MGM/EA	PSX
3	3	TOMB 4: LAST REVELATION	EIDOS	PSX, PC
4	4	CHAMP. MANAGER 99/00	EIDOS	PC
5	7	DRIVER	GT INTERACTIVE	PSX, PC
6	5	MEDAL OF HONOUR	EA	PSX
7	6	GRAN TURISMO	SONY	PSX
8	9	COLIN MCRAE RALLY	CODEMASTERS	PSX, PC
9	10	CRASH BANDICOOT 2	SONY	PSX
10	18	CRASH TEAM RACING	SONY	PSX
11	12	TEKKEN 3	NAMCO/SONY	PSX
12	11	AGE OF EMPIRES II	MICROSOFT	PC
13	8	WORMS ARMAGEDDON	INFOGRAMES/HASBRO	PSX, PC, N64, GBC
14	19	GRAND THEFT AUTO	TAKE 2	PSX, PC, GBC
15	17	DINO CRISIS	CAPCOM/VIRGIN	PSX
16	20	WWF WRESTLEMANIA 2000	THQ	N64, GBC
17	RE	SHADOWMAN	ACCLAIM	DC, PSX, N64,PC
18	13	GRAND THEFT AUTO 2	TAKE 2	PSX, PC
19	NEW	PLANESCAPE TORMENT	INTERPLAY	PC
20	21	QUAKE III ARENA	ID/ACTIVISION	PC
21	16	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	INFOGRAMES	PSX, N64
22	23	TOMB RAIDER 2	EIDOS	PSX, PC
23	15	RAYMAN	UBI SOFT	PSX, PC
24	37	RAINBOW SIX	RED STORM	PSX, N64, PC
25	28	MICKEY'S WILD ADVENTURE	DISNEY	PSX, PC
26	25	RESIDENT EVIL 2	VIRGIN	PSX, PC
27	26	MUSIC 2000	CODEMASTERS	PSX
28	27	CROC	FOX/EA	PSX, PC, SA
29	29	FA PREM. LEAGUE MGR 2000	EA	PSX, PC
30	32	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	PSX, N64, GBC, DC
31	RE	LMA MANAGER	CODEMASTERS	PSX
32	35	THE RUGRATS	THQ	PSX, GBC
33	14	POKEMON RED	NINTENDO	GB
34	22	SPYRO THE DRAGON 2	SONY	PSX
35	24	POKEMON BLUE	NINTENDO	GB
36	31	SUPER MARIO 64	NINTENDO	N64
37	RE	COOL BOARDERS 2	SONY	PSX
38	RE	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	DC, PC
39	RE	THIS IS FOOTBALL	SONY	PSX
40	RE	FINAL FANTASY VII	SQUARESOFT/EIDOS/SONY	PC, PSX

PLAYSTATION: FULL-PRICE

1. FIFA 2000	EA
2. **Tomorrow Never Dies**	**EA**
3. Tomb Raider 4	Eidos
4. Medal of Honour	EA
5. Crash Team Racing	Sony

NINTENDO 64

1. WWF Wrestlemania 2000	**THQ**
2. Super Mario 64	Nintendo
3. Donkey Kong 64	Nintendo
4. F-Zero X	Nintendo
5. Super Smash Bros	Nintendo

PC CD-ROM: FULL-PRICE

1. Champ Man. 99/00	**Eidos**
2. Age of Empires II	Microsoft
3. Planescape Torment	Interplay
4. Quake III Arena	id/Activision
5. Tomb Raider 4	Eidos

GAME BOY COLOUR

1. Super Mario Bros.	**Nintendo**
2. The Rugrats	THQ
3. WWF Wrestlemania 2000	THQ
4. Zelda DX	Nintendo
5. Tetris Deluxe	Nintendo

PLAYSTATION: BUDGET

1. Gran Turismo	**Sony**
2. Crash Bandicoot 2	Sony
3. Tekken 3	Sony
4. C. McRae Rally	Codemasters
5. Rayman	Ubi Soft

DREAMCAST

1. Shadowman	**Acclaim**
2. J. White's 2: Cueball	Virgin
3. Soul Calibur	Namco
4. Sonic Adventure	Sega
5. UEFA Striker	Infogrames

PC CD-ROM: BUDGET

1. Virus Scan Classic	**McAfee**
2. Theme Hospital	EA
3. Grand Theft Auto	Take 2
4. R. Tycoon Add-On	Hasbro
5. Worms	Infogrames

GAME BOY MONO

1. Pokemon Red	**Nintendo**
2. Pokemon Blue	Nintendo
3. Tennis	Nintendo
4. F1 Race	Nintendo
5. Metroid 2	Nintendo

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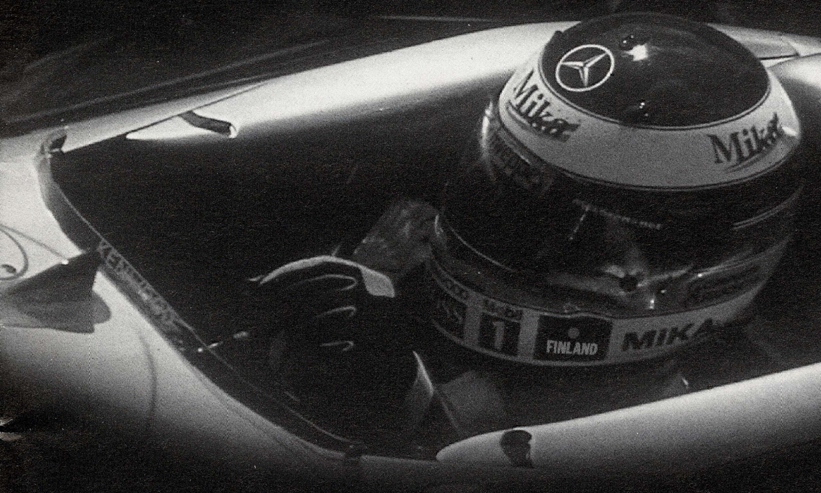
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WORLD CHAMPIONS 1999

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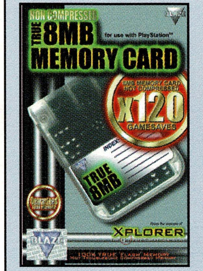

This latest Blaze memory card from those lovely people at Fire International boasts 8MB.

As if this wasn't enough, users can send their card back to Fire where, for a small fee, the company will upgrade the card to double its memory size. Excellent idea, excellent value.

MCV has a memory card, worth £19.99, to give away to 10 lucky winners. To be in with a chance of winning this handy prize just answer the following question then email us at mcvproduct@hotmail.com Don't forget your postal address.

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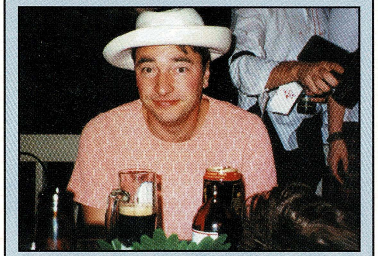
B. Joytech
C. Wild Things

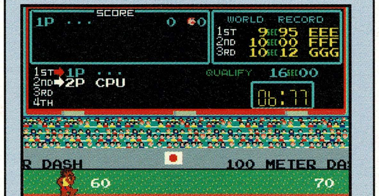
Hidden Camera



Hidden Camera returns with the shock revelation that Red Storm's director of European sales and marketing Rob Gross likes to dress up in women's clothing. One of his staff has tried to suggest that this shot was taken at a fancy dress party, but we know that he's proud of his cross-dressing ways.

Hall Of Fame

Track and Field



Released: 1984
Developer: Konami
Publisher: Konami
Format: Arcade/C64/MSX

Credentials: This athletics arcade title was an instant success. Players could choose from ten events. The gameplay was hit two run buttons as fast as possible then a third 'action' button.

What happened next: Inevitable cash-ins followed. Most notable was Daley Thompson's Decathalon by Ocean and Konami's own follow-up, Hyper Sports. The fad was resurrected in 1996 by Konami with a PlayStation update. Button bashing became hugely popular again and Konami's lively PlayStation sequel hits stores in February.

Not fully up to date with current industry lingo and market trends? Worry not, for Bluffer's Guide is here to help you through those long silences in your next big meeting...

Bluffer's Guide

No.69 WAP

KERPOW!!!
Excuse me?

Sorry, I thought we were having a fight, comic-book style.
No. WAP is the propellerheads' favourite new acronym.

Oh right. WAP as in, er….
Wireless Application Protocol.

Right, right, Wireless Application Protocol, I'm with you: when and where it's safe to use your radio, that sort of thing.
Not quite. It's a technology that allows mobile phone users to access the Internet.

Fantastic. So that means Mr Office Bloke can now email his lovely wife to tell her that he's "on the train" and will be ready for picking up at the British Rail car park in 20 minutes, rather than making us all listen while he chats pointlessly on his bloody mobile.
You're not thinking this through. When WAP phones go on sale, probably next month, they'll be able to download any web page, stripped of all the flashy visuals, through dedicated WAP portals.

NOKIA
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With WAP technology, mobiles could start carrying decent games...or handheld consoles could become phones

Mobile phone screen technology will also be enhanced to embrace the new function, with the games industry ideally placed to take advantage of this brave new world of entertainment. Games on phones... it's a massive market.

Sorry pal, you're miles behind. My phone already plays games.
Yeah, Memory, Snake, Logic and the ever-absorbing, Which Shape is Going To Pop Up Next?

We all know that those aren't proper games. No, the next generation of mobile phone games will be… er, well no one's quite sure what they'll be, but it's likely that leading companies like Nokia and Orange will actually co-fund some specialist software projects just to see what this industry's developers and publishers can come up with.

It all sounds like techno-vanity to me, the usual nerds getting carried away. I mean why not just take a Game Boy or Neo Geo with you and play proper games? That sector's booming already.
Your suspicion is understandable, even if it is based on the fact that you've got more chance of getting to grips with the rules of baseball than WAP technology.

And as for the Game Boy/Neo Geo argument, absolutely, but why shouldn't that handheld come with a WAP phone add-on as standard?

So handheld consoles become phones. I see, yes, and so… er, hang on a minute? My electric toothbrush is ringing.
Oh yes, that'll be for me. Time for a quick game of Dungeons and Dragons, see you next week.

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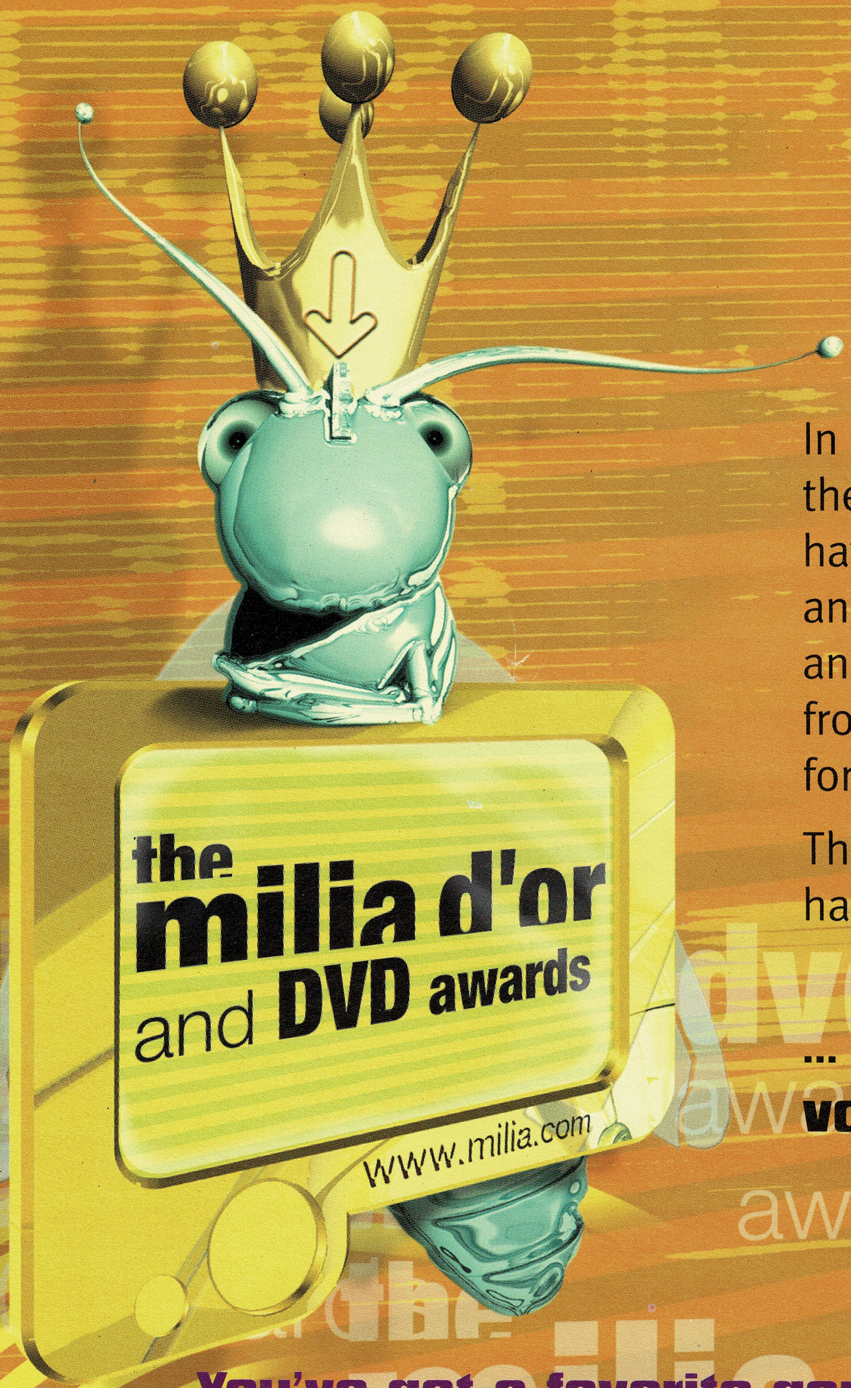
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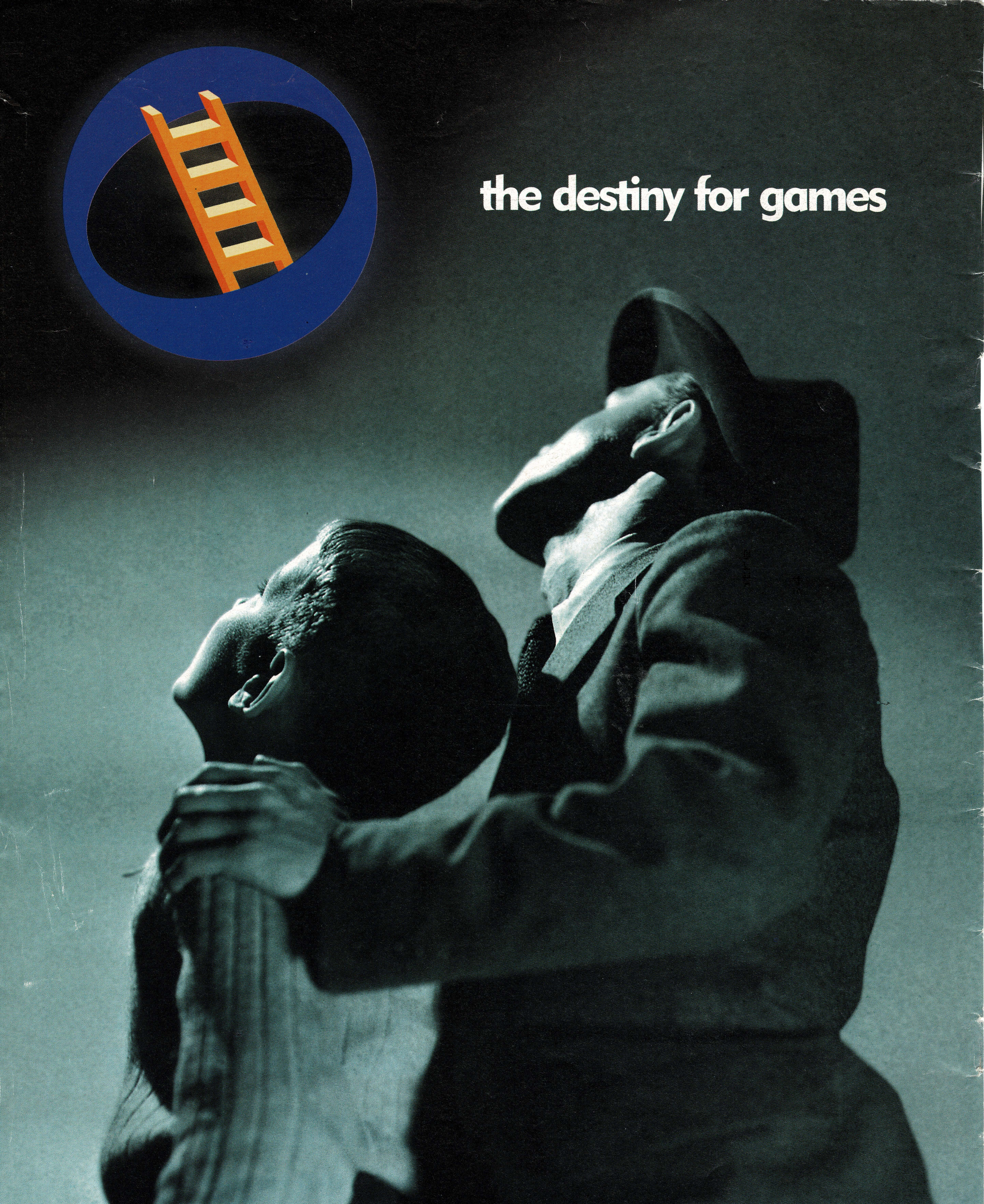

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